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A JOURNEY

FROM

NAPLES TO JERUSALEM,

BY WAY OF

ATHENS, EGYPT, AND THE PENINSULA OF SINAI,

INCLUDING A TRIP TO THE VALLEY OF FAYOUM;

TOGETHER WITH A TRANSLATION OF

M. LINANT DE BELLEFONDS' "MÉMOIRE SUR LE LAC MŒRIS."

BY DAWSON BORRER, ESQ.

"When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him."—BACON Ess. 18.

EGYPTIAN GIRL ORNAMENTED WITH KOHL AND BLUE PIGMENT.

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TO

WILLIAM BORRER, ESQ., F.R.S., F.L.S., &c. &c.,

OF BARROW HILL, SUSSEX, THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED, BY HIS SON,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE author of this volume feels that an apology is due to the public for thus venturing to lay before it, a work, every page of which cries aloud that it is begotten of a young and unpractised pen.

There is a halo, however, of such sublime interest encircling those countries on which he more particularly treats, that the slightest information regarding them is worthy of attention, although clad in garments of unaspiring composition. Let this be his excuse for thus trespassing, as he can neither boast that extensive erudition, which

alone renders travellers' notes worthy of a place amidst the archives of literature, nor that flow of language and elegance of style which it behoves the aspirant to literary fame to command.

Led onward by this motto, "Jucundum nihil est, nisi quod reficit varietas," he roamed from land to land seeking amusement and instruction, not unmindful that "the use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, see them as they are;" and that notwithstanding the great and good Lord Verulam permits not the traveller to "change his country manners for those of foreign parts," yet he is allowed to "prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country."

The Author must be pardoned for reiterating a declamation very generally made by those who, after "Voyageant sans dessein" betwixt the straits of Dover and the ancient gates of India, sit down at their own hearthsides to "make a

book," viz., That he had not during travel, nor indeed until some months after his return to England, the remotest intention of offering his "notes by the way" to the public gaze.

If a more extensive circle than that for which these notes were originally put together reap any gratification from their perusal, he is fully repaid for any labour it may have cost him.

As to the hurried translation annexed of M. Linant de Bellefonds' "Memoires sur le Lac Mœris," as the Author visited the valley of Fayoum, so little known, and as the original pamphlet is difficult to be obtained in this country, and the Egyptian lithography of the map inserted therein is so execrably executed as to require minute examination to understand it, he deemed that it might not prove unacceptable in the form now presented.

La Bruyère said of a book laid before him for inspection, "Que sa place était immédiatement au-dessous rien." Critics may, perhaps too justly,

allot to this, my work, a place upon the same shelf: to that iron-hearted race I dedicate the little vignette below, and beg that my grateful *siesta* may not be rudely broken in upon.

AFTER A BATH.

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JOURNEY FROM NAPLES TO JERUSALEM,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

VOYAGE FROM NAPLES TO MALTA.

Breeze off Calabria.—Messina.—Syracuse.—Ancient city.—The Latomiæ.—The last of the Peripatetici.—Approach Malta.—Valetta.—Fort St. Elmo.—Language.—Aspect of the island.

It was blowing a stiff breeze from the N. W., when, upon the 6th day of January, 1843, the creaky old Neapolitan steamer, Francesco, rapidly pursued her trackless course towards Sicily. The wrathful waters, bellowing amidst the thousand caverns of Calabria's stern coast, dashed back in foam and spray, repulsed by that dark barrier. Clinging to the bulwarks of the trembling craft, then cried I, with Gonzalo, "Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground, long heath, brown furze—anything. The wills above be done; but I would feign die a dry

death." That night, and the morning of the 7th, the gale continued with unabated violence, but towards the afternoon, lulling slightly, we ventured to bring-to, and land some passengers at the point Tropæa, a short distance north of Cape Vaticano, and on the southern sweep of the gulf of St. Eufemia. These passengers were, two peasant women, of Calabria, and a shaven-pated priest, whom, had it not been for the severe weather, we should have before landed some twenty miles above this point; but it was impossible to do so with safety.

The sea still ran high, and the paddle-box of the steamer striking the gunwhale of the bark alongside before it could get clear of her, very nearly capsized it. The shrieks of the priest rang in our ears above the roaring of the waves, as, throwing his hands on high, he cried aloud to the Madonna to save his craven soul; but a heavy sea rolling on relieved the boat from the steamer, and away it shot some twenty yards astern, pitching the holy father headforemost into a heap of baggage in the stern; and this was the last we saw of his Reverence, for we ourselves were now dashing onward on our course, and the little Calabrian craft was hid in the troughs of the sea. The fire-begetting cone of Stromboli was now upon our right, the most remarkable of the Æolian or Lipari isles. The God of the winds proved to us that he had not forgotten his ancient seat, as driving on we neared

that fruitful isle, midst the fertile vales and plains of which

> " Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
> And Jove descends in each prolific shower."

Regardless of the howls of Scylla and Charybdis, we entered the fine basin, formed by a curious sickle-shaped curve of land, running out opposite the town of Messina, which, backed by sloping hills well clothed with vineyards and wood, smiles upon the harbour and the opposite Calabrian coast, a pretty object, prettily situated—the case, indeed, with most Italian and Sicilian towns; but then within their gates, how different;—what narrow streets, what stifling atmosphere. But with Messina it is not so, for she has good streets, respectable hotels, pleasant promenades in her suburbs. However, we had little opportunity of enjoying any of these, for we only tarried there a night and a day, during which time it rained without intermission, and blew a hurricane; so that an English brig in the harbour broke her moorings, causing great commotion and destruction amongst feluccas and other small craft seeking refuge there. The depth of water in the centre of this basin is so great, that men-of-war may securely ride within it. On the morning of the 9th the scene was changed: we were quietly floating in the " great harbour" of Syracuse, with a warm sun shining upon deck, and an officer of health reaching up with a lengthy pair of tongs from a boat alongside to receive our papers.

How is Syracuse fallen! how changed since that period when pronounced by Cicero, "maximam Græcarum urbium pulcherrimam omnium," the most beautiful and powerful of all Greek cities; since that period when the Athenian Thucydides declared her nowise inferior to his own native city, the emblem of magnificence and strength, the eye of Greece, the school of the world! The brave Marcellus, born

> —— "in war's rude lists to combat,
> From youth to age" ——

"when he surveyed from an eminence the great and magnificent city of Syracuse, shed many tears in pity of its impending fate, reflecting into what a scene of misery and desolation its fair appearance would be changed when it came to be sacked and plundered by his soldiers." The ships of Alexandria and of Carthage no longer seek the harbours of Ortygia; the only one of the four districts of the ancient city where the shadow of its former strength in some degree is stayed. There, bastion walls and flanking towers cite before you the spirit of the "mathematical Briareus," Archimedes; who, deigning for a time to turn his attention to "the *amusements* of geometry," baffled the daring of the Roman Consul, hurled massive rocks and crushing beams upon his many-oared galleys, seizing them by their prows, with claws of iron and gigantic hooks, whirled them high in air with irresistible force, then plunged them in the deep; so that the

surface of the harbour of Ortygia was covered with the miserable wrecks of the attacking fleet;—numbers, bravery, and determination prevailed over by the force of one mighty genius!

As to the modern Syracuse, a more wretched city I have seldom entered, a more squalid-looking people than her inhabitants I have seldom seen. After breakfasting at a place (not to be dignified with the name of cafè) on bad bread and oranges, which we bought from an old crone sitting beside the gutter in the centre of the street, we hastened to visit the most celebrated and interesting spots around the city; of all of which those which excite the most stirring recollections are, the *Latomiæ*, or excavations in the rock, where the miserable 7,000 Athenians, wretched remnant of the proudest army ever fitted out by Greece, were left to writhe beneath the scorching sun and cold night winds, cursing Alcibiades and the Assembly for not heeding the ominous mutilations of their Mercuries, and envying the fate of Nicias and Demosthenes, who had led them on, a sacrifice to evil policy and avarice.

A stout square man, with an enormous beard, an outcast of Israel, accompanied us this day on our excursions; with him he bore a huge folio, and whenever a good thought struck him, it mattered not where we were—in the streets or in the lanes—down he sat at once and transcribed it; the fruit of intellect was not to be lost. This strange remnant

of the Peripatetici became so excited within the tomb of Archimedes, that it required great exertion to draw him away towards the ship again. He was quite a land philosopher, however; on board giving way to a very immoderate perturbation of spirit, clinging to the cabin divans, whilst loud and lamentable gushings forth of agony shook his portly frame.

By nine o'clock on the morning of the 11th we were rapidly nearing Malta, the forts and houses of La Valetta gradually appearing. The Cyclops, man-of-war steamer, hove in sight westward, having in tow the Formidable, 84-gun ship, the narrow escape of which from going to the bottom in the then late gales, after having received great damage off the Spanish coast, may be remembered.

The aspect of Malta, approaching it from this quarter, is not very striking; the surface of the island sloping from the south-west to the north-east, it has a flatter and lower appearance viewed from this side, than might perhaps be expected by the impressions received from general descriptions of the rock.

Gliding into the Valetta harbour, as we gazed upon the massive frowning forts guarding its entrance, particularly that of St. Elmo, how could we but thrust aside "the cloudy wings" of time, and behold the valiant Valette, surrounded by his devoted band, wielding on high those blades which their ancestors had dyed with Moslem blood, as

gathering round the holy sepulchre, they struggled to preserve its purity; but in vain! the overwhelming hosts of Arabia pressed on; the sword of the cross flashed forth in Cyprus, Rhodes, and Candia. Each retiring step of chivalry was tracked with the blood of the Mahommedans. Solyman the Magnificent urged on the chase. Driven from island to island, the cross ultimately was planted on this sea-girt rock; the gathering cry was raised, here to make a last and desperate stand. Nature had fortified the spot; art had rendered it almost impregnable. The Infidel knew this, and stood aloof. But brigantines shot forth from beneath the beetling cliffs of Malta, scoured the seas, descended upon the coasts of Africa and Greece; then were seen to glide from the harbours of Tunis, Tripoli, Modon, and Coron, deeply laden with captives and with spoil. The sign of the cross was on the flag. The fury of the Turkish Emperor was roused afresh; and in 1565 galleys and galliots innumerable, crowded with the flower of his warriors, belted the rocky fortress of the Knights of Malta. The walls of St. Elmo trembled before the mighty battering engines. The voice of prayer was heard within by night, the shout of valour and encouragement by day. Yet the rock showed above the ruins! Two alone were left of its defenders; they plunged into the boiling waves; and the Turkish colours floated on the ramparts. "Ah!" cried the veteran Mustapha, as the shout of the *Allah Acbar*

rung through the Moslem ranks, "what will the capture of the father cost, when the son has caused such destruction amidst our noblest troops?" For though Fort St. Elmo had fallen into their hands, the city itself still remained untaken. And the son it proved, indeed, had held out sufficiently long to afford time for the arrival of a Spanish fleet to succour the father. Again the colours of the holy order floated on the rock; again the flowing vests and scarlet cassocks of the chivalrous knights were seen upon the bastioned walls; and the dark hulls of the Turkish fleet had disappeared from the eastern horizon.

Whoever thinks of Malta, forthwith the Knights of the Holy Order of St. John stand forth, and their pre-eminently illustrious deeds crowd the memory. Whoever writes on Malta speaks of the noble Provençal, Valette; but is it not excusable?

As to the island itself, its character is curious and unique, as is the language of the natives; therefore it is worthy of a passing notice from all. The three centuries' rule of the Knights of St. John, probably assisted much in producing the abominable *lingua Franca*, so much in vogue there. A body of men, gathered together, as it were, from the four corners of Europe, and huddled, with their retainers, on a little rock of twelve miles in diameter and sixty in circumference, naturally made a Babel of it. The eight different tongues, of those consti-

tuting the order, quickly formed an alliance with the degenerated Arabic of the natives, and thus begot an incomparable patois, which the great and increasing concourse of foreigners continued to ornament. I say degenerated *Arabic* of the natives, for though it is usual to consider the Maltese tongue as of Phœnician or Carthaginian origin, the research of the Rev. C. F. Schlienz, as noticed by Dr. Lowe, almost proves it to be a mere corruption of Arabic, "nearly the whole treasury of its words conforming with the rules, and even to the anomalies of the Arabic grammar."

My friend, Mr. Henry Woodhead, who had undertaken with me the eastern trip, was unfortunately laid up soon after our arrival here with a feverish attack, which prevented our very minutely examining the island. But one or two excursions I made by myself in the course of our stay.

After passing the gateways, drawbridges, and innumerable lines of fortifications of La Valetta, one hopes, perhaps, to find something to cheer the eye. Cherish not such hope! Before sallying forth mount the bastions, and gaze towards the four cardinal points, lest you be a prey to woeful disappointment. You will see one vast field, apparently of ruins, extending around you,—one scene of desolation. Then get upon your ragged island horse, and ride for the livelong day on narrow paths, covered with loose stones, and flanked with walls on either side of unhewn blocks piled one on

the other; by dint of *craning* over which, you may probably succeed in pricking your chin with the top of a cactus, or, if fortune smiles upon you, a little withered clover, a few cotton plants, starved leeks, or a tobacco plant or two may assuage your curiosity. The fact is, the whole rock is covered with these walls, forming small compartments, within which a little mould has been cast to cover the nakedness of the land, and which, the proprietor earnestly hopes, by means of these walls, to preserve from being carried by the next gale of wind back to Sicily, from whence it was brought with infinite care and expense. These walls are also supposed to be of much avail in keeping the sun off, but the strong reflection from them must almost overwhelm any little advantage gained in that way. At one corner of these little compartments, and forming part of the wall, you will often observe an erection, a degree higher than the wall itself, flat-topped and square, with, in all probability, an enormous mass of prickly pear nigh at hand. It requires considerable reasoning to convince yourself that this is a house, but such you are told it is; and perhaps it may be further demonstrated by a black-eyed urchin, full of fun and impudence, making his exit from a hole in the side, with a broad grin on his bronzed face, and the eternal "nix mangiare," rapidly issuing from between his lips.

The Mosaic precept, "When thou buildest a new

house, then thou shalt make a *battlement* for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house if any man fall from thence," is not here attended to; so I presume the tops of the houses are not so much resorted to as in the East.

CHAPTER II.

MALTA.

Excursion to Citta Vecchia.—Grotto of St. Paul, &c.—Cimmerian excavations.—Road to Monte Benjemma.—Great squill or sea onion.—"Carthagenian tombs" of Monte Benjemma.—Prickly pear.—View from heights of Monte Benjemma.—Lose my way.—Maltese sheep, pigs, Italian swine.—Maltese cows.—Ploughs.—Knights Hospitallers of St. John.—Obtain a berth on board Her Majesty's ship Geyser, for Athens.

I RODE one day to *Citta Vecchia*, the *Medina* of the Saracens, the pride of the island, until La Valetta rose and gradually eclipsed the ancient queen; for nature has at the foot of Mount Xiberras formed a most noble harbour, which, improved by the hand of man, now yields the palm to none. Proximity to the sea was of secondary consideration when Citta Vecchia had her foundations laid upon that commanding summit, in the centre of the island, which her crumbling walls now occupy; a strong position, and good covert from shafts and bolts, was sought by her founders, and there it was found. They had few ships to shelter, little merchandise to crowd their ports.

It is a bare and rugged height indeed that Citta

Vecchia stands upon, and rocks and houses so strongly assimilate in colour, that it is difficult to distinguish them. The isolated position of the old cathedral, which is rather a striking structure of the seventeenth century, somewhat rescues you from the above difficulty, however.

Arrived at the base of her hill, I was surrounded by several wild-looking beings of the Cicerone character, and, to save annoyance, fixed on one, an active-looking fellow, who, to try his metal, I trotted up the ascent, and finding his powers of speed very superior to those of my steed, engaged him to run by my side to Monte Benjemma, some three miles the other side of Citta Vecchia; but first was I led to visit "the Grotto of St. Paul," which lies beneath a church, small, and of mean architecture.

A marble statue of the apostle adorns this excavation in the natural rock, which otherwise is without ornament. "Old man," said I to the ancient individual that has the care of this church and cave, "do you really suppose that St. Paul enjoyed here the hospitality of Publius, the Roman Governor? do you think that the blessed apostle would have told us that Publius 'received him and lodged him courteously' if he had offered him such a gloomy cavern as this? Even refined Romans might have sometimes preferred grottoes to palaces during the great heat of summer, but St. Paul, in January, 61, surely would not have deemed this subterraneous abode a pleasant one."

This cave was probably once a quarry, there being nothing within it to characterize it as an ancient sepulchre or abode. Leaving it I then passed on to some catacombs nigh at hand, having first purchased with a few "grani" a large fossil tooth of some Saurian, remains of which are numerous in the tertiary limestone of the island.

In these catacombs you find recesses for the bodies; niches, perhaps, for lamps; and places cut for the head of the corpse; all in a pretty perfect state.

The ancient inhabitants of Malta may, perhaps, have used these caves as dwellings; as Ulysses found the Cimmerii of Campania, when he paid them a visit on the gloomy shores of Lake Avernus, frequenting such subterraneous retreats, both to get out of the sunshine and to conceal plunder.

"There, in a lonely land and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells:
The sun ne'er views the uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances or retreats:
Unhappy race, whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades."

POPE, Od. 11.

Whether the lives and dispositions of the ancient Maltese were best suited to Cimmerian darkness I am not aware. Doubtless these excavations have, since their day, been used as sepulchres, and perhaps asylums, by the early Christians, as those in the neighbourhood of Rome were, during some of the bloody persecutions under her emperors. The

crosses and inscriptions to be seen in these excavations verify this supposition. But it struck me that the retreats at Citta Vecchia more resemble those at Syracuse and the cryptæ of the Necropolis near Alexandria, in style, perhaps, than the Cimmerian excavations in the neighbourhood of Baiæ, where the chambers are less connected than in the former, and rather assimilate with the grottoes so common amidst the mountains of Syria; such as the Israelites possibly made because of the Midianites, "dens in the mountains and caves."

Leaving these shady abodes, and giving, by the way, a summary glance at the old palaces of the knights of St. John—crumbling remains of former pride—I galloped through the gloomy streets, and found myself at the cathedral, built on the site of the house where Publius dwelt, saith tradition. There are one or two old paintings here, stiff saints with gilt haloes, which put me in mind of the "Accadémia" of the ancient city of Siena, rejoicing in its "Lieta Scuóla" of unknown antiquity. Yet are these taper-fingered representations of Madonnas and saints interesting; for upon such stocks the noble art was grafted, sprung forth, sprouted, and bore the flowers and fruit it hath borne; thanks to Cimabue the Florentine, and his Giotto. Turning upon my heel I again sought my horse, and found it in the hands of a host of my "nix mangiare" friends; my own private runner sitting meantime upon a Cyclopean mass of rock, munching with

evident satisfaction—"O dura messorum ilia"—a huge garlic. Mounting, I cut right and left with my whip; restrained any lax spirit of generosity that arose in my heart; left my "smiche" to his garlic, and rode off towards Monte Benjemma. He was, however, not long catching me; for beds of rock and stones forced me to dismount and walk. Much of the great white lily grows hereabouts, as also the great squill, or sea onion, so common in the neighbourhood of Syracuse, particularly around the cave known as the Ear of Dionysius. Old Gerarde, in his "Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes," dilates amusingly upon the medicinal virtues of this species of plant, pronouncing it "hurtfull to the inner parts," unless before use "the root be covered with paste or clay (as Dioscorides teacheth) and then put into an oven to be baked or roasted;" after which, "that is to be taken especially which is in the midst of it, which being cut to pieces, must be boyled; then must the pieces be hanged on a thread and dried in the shadow, so that no one piece toucheth another." But further, saith he, "Bondoletius was wont to tell this following story concerning the poisonous and maligne qualities thereof:—There were two fishermen, whereof the one lent unto the other (whom he hated) his knife, poisoned with the juice of this, for to cut his meat withall; he suspecting no treachery, cut his victuals therewith, and so eat them, the other abstaining therefrom, and saying he had no sto-

mache. Some few days after, he that did eat the victuals died; which showed the strong and deadly qualities of this plant." It seems that this squill was also used in his time to make oil, wine, and vinegar of; but its properties are now forgotten, I imagine.

Monte Benjemma presents a precipitous face of rock, in which are cut the ancient chambers vulgarly known as "the Carthaginian tombs," and more likely, I should imagine, to have been abodes of the aborigines than those in the suburb "Rabbato" of Civita Vecchia. Peasants dwell in them at this day, and mules and pigs partake of the shelter with their owners. The débris from the face of the precipice has considerably choked up the ravine below, affording nourishment to huge prickly pears and a few shrubs, as well as foundation for a pathway up to the excavations. The former plant grows in Malta to a great size, but both in Sicily and Syria far larger may be seen. Goats and cows are fond of the leaf when bruised, and the figs are said to be palatable: in Sicily one may see them in the shops preserved in sugar as comfits.

From the heights in the neighbourhood of Monte Benjemma is a good view of "Gozo," famed as the isle of Calypso, and also as a grand depôt for donkeys, fruit, and pretty women; its cliffs are stern and lofty; between it and Malta lie the little islands of Cumino and Cuminotto, off which the French convoy lay June, 1798. It was on yon point

of St. Katharine that General Dessaix disembarked Reynier held Gozo preparatory to receiving the keys of Malta from that dastardly Grand Master, Hompesch, who, instead of blowing the French fleet out of the water, as he might have done, ceded this intensely craved stepping-stone towards that country, which of all those laved by the waters of the Mediterranean is most to be coveted, both for its fertility and position; but the inscription, "Magnæ et invictæ Britanniæ Melitensium amor et Europæ vox has insulas confirmat, "appeared soon after over the guard-house at La Valetta. The battle of Aboukir had been fought!

The north-eastern coast of Malta is prettily indented. As I stood upon the summit of Benjemma, and beheld the deep blue sky reflected upon the calm waters of the "great sea;" here, lost in the retired bays and coves; there, stretching forth a noble expanse,

> "——— boundless, endless, and sublime,
> The image of eternity, the throne
> Of the Invisible,"

and then, again, upon my right, beheld the beautiful "Bay of St. Paul," and upon my left, the craggy cliffs of Gozo, Cumino, and Cuminotto, softened in the azure mirror, I could but say within myself, "Even Malta, then, has its own peculiar beauties!"

Having discharged my attendant, I proceeded on my way back, by a different route, nearer the sea-

coast, but soon found myself in a most inextricable labyrinth of walls, without apparently much prospect of being enabled to keep an engagement I had to dine in Fort St. Elmo. In vain made I anxious and studied signs to the peasants, shouting "Valetta," by way of enlightening them as to my wishes. They enlightened me with "nix mangiari," or a broad grin, and "ye—s," a word they pride themselves much on having attained. A few sheep were scattered here and there, eagerly searching for any little vegetation there might be. These animals have long silky hair, rather than wool, very fine legs, and long necks, with a very small head, adorned with remarkably bright and large eyes. The pigs of the island are rough wiry haired fellows, with a most knowing cock of the eye and immense stiff manes, which erecting ever and anon, they rush about and gambol with a furious and forbidding aspect, bringing to my mind the abhorred swine that feed on the acorns of Italia's Ilex forests, and from which the sportsman is often compelled to flee with his dog in his arms; for a dog is a *bon bouche* they will never miss the opportunity of seizing if possible. This may perhaps be questioned by those who have not sported amidst the forests of the Apennines, but I have known some who have been compelled to fire upon the swine to save their dog, and have myself more than once been driven to run away for the same purpose. It is a great treat for one who has suffered this awful visitation of swine, to adjourn

to the *Porta del Popolo* of the "Eternal City" on the grand slaughtering days, where he may see a butcher with a sharp steel foil rush into the middle of a vast herd of swine, and passing the weapon as quick as thought from the heart of one pig to that of another, lay two or three dozen of them dead at your feet without a particle of bloodshed, and little squeak to agitate your nerves.

The cows of Malta are long, thin, ragged, and red, all angles, with spreading horns of great length, and remarkably bad expression of countenance; they are, generally speaking, kept shut up and fed on beans, water melon, and cactus leaves, except in Gozo, where they find a little pasture. Riding onward, my attention was attracted by a man ploughing, with an instrument wonderfully simple, but well adapted to the thin soil of the island, which requires indeed a mere scratch to work it up. When his work was over, he put the plough upon his shoulder, and walked off. Soon after this a mule passed me, with four ploughs upon her back, going home from her day's labour. The plough in common use in Syria is much of the same style as those of Malta, except in this, that the latter are wholly of wood, mere crooked sticks fastened together, whilst the former generally have a slight shod of iron, thus rendering literally applicable the words of Isaiah the prophet, when, in referring to those "last days" when "nation shall not lift up

sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," he impresses how peaceful shall be the state of all people by foretelling that "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares." The ploughs of Italy are rough uncouth instruments enough, but even in Virgil's time seem to have been shod with iron, as he says in his instructions for building the plough in the first Georgic:

> "On either side the head produce an ear,
> And sink a socket for the *shining share*."

It was long after the appointed hour that I arrived at Fort St. Elmo. The mysterious tales of certain spectrums and strange unearthly sounds, seen and heard by one of the party, when formerly quartered at Gibraltar, caused quick revolutions of the claret jug. I left my hospitable friends impregnated with the opinion that "Adam's first wife, Lilis, begat nothing but Devils," as Burton, in his "Digression of Spirits," saith "the Thalmudists do affirm."

We very much regretted that we did not, whilst in the island, have an opportunity of seeing the last of the Knights of Malta: for we were told that one was still in existence at Valetta. According to Dugdale, in his "Monasticon," the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, of the Order of St. Augustine, now called Knights of Malta, were first instituted A.D. 612, in the reign of the Emperor Heraclius, when several Italian merchants of Amalfi, in Apulia, resorting to Jerusalem, obtained of the

Caliph a piece of ground to build them a house on, where they built a church of the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and placed there an abbot and monks of their own country. Christian pilgrims were often entertained there, a structure being raised purposely for their reception. The revenue of the Order was derived from yearly collections, made by the merchants of Amalfi, which they spent in keeping up the holy edifices, and in relieving the poor Christians. After the expelling of the Infidels from Jerusalem their possessions increased much, so that they had towns and castles. In course of time they obtained from Rome a discharge from the power and obedience of the Patriarch, and grants of privileges were bestowed upon them which freed them from subjection to any authority. The ceremony of admission to the holy Order, as given in the words of Dugdale, is curious, "When any one desires to be a Hospitaller, he is to appear on a Sunday before the Chapter, and to desire of the Master, or other holding the Chapter, to be received into the society of the house; then, if the major part of the Chapter be for admitting him, the brother appointed to receive him is to tell him:— 'that many great men have desired the same; but that if he thinks to be finely clad, and well mounted, and live in delights, he is much mistaken; for when he shall have a mind to sleep, he must watch; and when he will watch, he must sleep; and when he would eat, he must fast; and when he would fast,

he must eat; besides he will be sent where he cares not to go, and must resign his will entirely to follow another's.' Then he asks him, 'Will you do all these things?' and he is to answer, 'Yes, if it please God.'" Dugdale then gives at length an oath to be taken by the new brother to observe all the rules of the Order; "Also that he will be a servant and slave to their lords,—the sick;" and the person receiving him says, "They promise him bread and water, and mean clothing; more than which he cannot demand, and that he shall partake of all the good works that are done in their Order."

The first *Master* of the Order seems to have been Gerard, who was Guardian of the Hospital of the poor in Jerusalem, when the gallant descendant of Charlemagne, Godfrey, of Bouillon, took the city in 1099. This is the same Gerard, who, during the time Godfrey was besieging the city, fell into a great scrape for throwing loaves at the Christian army under the pretence of pelting them with stones; whereupon he was brought before the Sultan with his loaves, which, upon being exhibited, were indeed turned to stone; and he was licensed still to pelt the starving Christians, when miracle again converted them to loaves! Philip de Villiers de L'Isle Adam settled the Order at Malta, A.D. 1530, after the loss of Rhodes. In England the Order first appeared about the reign of Henry I.; and a monastery was founded at Clerkenwell; but in the time of Edward I. they fell into disgrace. For,

claiming the privilege of burying all persons who had given them alms during their lives, "certain felons having been executed at Invelcestre, the servants of the hospital went to the gallows and took them down; whereupon one of them came to life again, and took sanctuary in the church, where he continued until he had abjured the realm."

When Pope Clement V. suppressed the Order of the Knights Templars, Edward II. conferred all their rights on the Hospitallers; thus they came into possession of the Temple in London, which was afterwards seized from them by Hugh Spencer the Younger, but again restored by Edward III.

The Order was suppressed by Henry VIII., but "Philip and Mary, being desirous to appear by their actions, as well as style and title, Defenders of the Faith," and, "considering that the said Order had renounced the world, and devoted them to defend Christendom against the Infidels," desired Cardinal Pole to re-establish the same, which he did; and it became known as the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England. The tombs of the Knights in the Cathedral Church of St. John, at Valetta, are interesting, as are also the massive keys of Jerusalem, Acre, and Rhodes, which lie in one of the chapels, remarkable for a railing in front of solid silver, which being painted over, escaped most fortunately the rapacious Napoleon when the chief treasures of the cathedral fell into his grasp.

The specimens of filagree workmanship to be found in the shops of Malta are well worthy of attention, as showing the height of skill arrived at in the art of working metal. Whilst speaking with a merchant one day in his office, a very stylish *Maltese* carriage drove up, and a creature, young and fair, stepping forth, presented me with a printed intimation that she was the principal cantatrice in the Opera of "Lucia di Lamermoor" for that evening. Of course, I could not resist patronising her. The assembly was motley enough; neither did my fair cantatrice distinguish herself much, except as a barbarous murderess of an exquisite opera.

The time had now arrived that we wished to leave Malta, and, through the courtesy of the Admiral Superintendent, Sir John Lewis, an acquaintance of my friend, Mr. Woodhead, we obtained a passage to Athens on board Her Majesty's ship Geyser, war-steamer.

CHAPTER III.

MALTA TO ATHENS.

Leave Malta.—Her Majesty's ship Geyser.—Coast of Greece.—Island of Cerigo.—Round the promontory of Cape Malea.—Eastern coast of the Morea.—Greek isles.—First view of Acropolis of Athens.—Enter Piræus.—Her Majesty's ship Howe.

It was on the 21st day of January, whilst engaged with some friends of the Royal Artillery and Engineers in discussing the merits of a tiffin at the Clarendon Hotel, that we were rather discomfited by the sudden and unexpected intelligence of orders being sent on board the Geyser to sail at three o'clock that afternoon. Bidding a hasty adieu to our guests, we rapidly descended the pestilential series of steps leading to the Marina, and embarked for the Geyser, almost stunned by the hybrid cries of native porters, boatmen, and mendicants, and drenched by torrents of rain descending at that moment.

About six p.m. the Geyser was running out of harbour. Darkness soon veiled Malta from our sight. On board I was delighted to find the relative of a family whose acquaintance had added much to the pleasure of my sojourn in Italy. Lieutenant

Hamilton, tired of inaction, had just joined the Geyser from Her Majesty's ship Queen, then the flag ship at Malta, and his courtesy contributed greatly to the enjoyment of the voyage to Athens. On board were also guests of Captain Carpenter, viz., Captain Macdonald, Lady Ashford, and the three Misses Ashford. The Geyser was freighted with midshipmen and provisions for Her Majesty's ship Howe, lying in the harbour of the Piræus. This steamer carries guns of the heaviest calibre that have ever been shipped in the British navy, but had lately lost her largest; for having run upon a reef of rocks off Cephalonia, on a voyage from Corfu to Malta, she lay for above thirty hours exposed to a severe gale, which compelled her to throw her guns overboard, all of which were, however, afterwards recovered, with the assistance of Her Majesty's ship L'Aigle, excepting the heaviest, which by some means slipped from the tackle used in raising it, and sank into deep water with a bad bottom. The paddle-boxes of this noble steamer are capped with boats, the invention of Captain G. Smith, to supply the great defect in the boating of war steamers, which has often very much interfered with their utility, as for instance, during the late operations on the coast of Syria.

The night was fair, though dark, as onward we glided; a slight swell was on the sea, but the rain had altogether ceased. After beguiling an hour or two with conversation and whist, we turned in.

Lieutenant Hamilton lent me a cot, as preferable to a hammock; but, cot or hammock, it was to me of little import—tramping sentries, shouting middies, with an infinity of unknown sounds, wholly defied the soft approach of

> "Sleep, rest of things. O pleasing deity!
> Peace of the soul, which cares doth crucifie,
> Weary bodies refresh and mollifie."

The "pax animi" is not to be found by a landsman, on board a man-of-war.

On the morning of the 22d, half-stunned by deck-swabbers, I raised myself cautiously in my cot, and employed several moments in speculating as to the proper mode of descent into the abyss below; but suddenly were my speculations concluded by my pitching out, *nolens volens*, thus putting an end to a most notable and philosophical plan I had created, and was on the point of putting into execution. My only consolation was, that no one seemed to observe the summary ejectment, and a friend to the right, Lieutenant of Marines, came down "by the run," the slingings of his hammock giving way. We were pursuing our course about the rate of nine knots and a-half the hour; slight swell, and squally during the day.

The morning of Sunday, the 23d, was fine—sea calm and beautiful—hardly a ripple on its surface. Behold the desired coast! the coast of Greece! The rocky cliffs of the southernmost point of Europe, Cape Matapan, rose some twenty-five miles

a-head, with the bold and broken line of its peninsula, forming the eastern coast of the Messenian Gulf, now called the Gulf of Coron. Looming in the distance, far to the north, lay Cape Gallo, with the little group of the Œnussæ Isles, barely distinguishable. Amidst those dark rocks of Matapan, the Tænarum of the ancients, was a gloomy cavern, guarded by a fearful serpent and Pluto's Cerberus, for it was one of the portals of hell. Upon that promontory Pausanias tells us there stood in his time a temple to Neptune.

White fleecy clouds capped the Taygetian range, the ancient barrier which shielded for a time the rebellious Messenians from their future iron-hearted oppressors, the Spartans. The calm waters of the Messenian Gulf laved the base of the Tænarum, the southernmost extremity of that wild and rugged range; whilst the eye, spanning the wide-spread mouth of the bay, sought in vain its northern coast, where the healing waters of the Parmissus mingle with the ocean, after flowing through those fertile plains which, speckled with fat flocks and herds of beeves, tempted the Laconians (B. C. 724 and 668) to burst the boundary and seize the envied territory, in spite of Aristomenes, the guardian angel; neither was the spoil relinquished until the Theban Epaminondas recalled the rightful owners from their cities of refuge, far away in foreign climes, again to lay the foundations of their capital at the foot of craggy Ithome, where, at this

day, the ruins of her strong walls, speak to the modern of Epaminondas and military renown, whilst those of her temples mourn the devotedness of those people to their gods, once worshipped there in forms of Parian stone and gold.

The weather being serene and warm, an awning was put up on deck to keep the sun off, and service read. A sudden squall, as we neared the land, rather disturbed the ceremony for a time, but quickly subsided, and all was calm again.

Now were we rapidly nearing the Laconian coast, presenting cliffs lofty, ragged, and remarkable for the red tinted rock composing them. Small villages might here and there be seen, as specks upon the barren mountain slopes, forming the rugged surface of the promontory of Matapan. Presently another of those vast indentations, giving so peculiar a form to the Morea, opened upon us—the Laconian Gulf—a noble bay. Darkness came over us as we entered the straits between the island "Cerigo" and the mainland. A glimmering light or two of fishermen, or perhaps pirates, starting up here and there upon the rocky coast on either side, alone broke through the dusky veil of night to tell of the vicinity of man; but how glorious in its brilliancy was the deep firmament above! and then the rolling waves cleaved by the proud ship would dash astern in broken foam, strewing the surface of the sea with ten thousand glistening diamonds! Piracy is still carried on to a

small extent by the Mainotes inhabiting the coast opposite Cerigo;—a fierce race, proud of their descent from the Spartans, and full of legends and traditions tending to keep alive the memory of Leonidas and stern Lycurgus, both of whom they have sainted. Little is known of the districts of Taygetus, which the lawless race inhabits, and the adventurous traveller might be well repaid by exploring them; for though a wild and barbarous people, the Mainotes are not devoid of literature; and though bloodthirsty and treacherous enemies, they are said to regard the rights of hospitality. The island of Cerigo (Cythera of the ancients) is of a barren and uninviting aspect, far better adapted for what it is this day—the "Botany Bay" of Greece—than for the cradle of Venus and the Trojan Helen, as the ancients deemed it. It lies exactly opposite the bay of Bœæ, formed by the island of "Onignathus," and the southernmost coast of Laconia, running out to Cape Malea. The promontory of Bœæ (which was that, I presume, stretching to the island Onignathus), according to Pausanias, was denominated "the jaw-bone of an ass," perhaps from the shape of the southern part of Onignathus, a portion of the coast of which from the sea something resembles the hinge of a jaw bone. The mighty Agamemnon raised a temple to Minerva on this point; also Apollo and Æsculapius had shrines in the neighbourhood of Bœæ.

No remains of importance are to be found on

Cerigo; no remnants of that "most holy temple of Venus Urania, which is the most ancient and sacred of all those which are dedicated by the Greeks to Venus." Vines and bees are its chief glory at present. It was midnight when we turned the headland of Malea, now St. Angelo; and as I paced the deck with an officer of the watch, I thought of the ancient proverb, "cum ad Maleam deflexeris obliviscere quæ sunt domi." In tempestuous weather doubtless the sea runs high, and furiously breaks upon this rocky point; then indeed the navigation of this strait—not 700 feet in width from land to land—must be perilous. Calm as it now was, the captain deemed it wise to slacken very considerably the speed of the ship. When day broke on the 24th we were steering northwards. Softened by distance and the morning haze, Malea with its lofty headland was still in view, whilst the mountain chains of Laconia, with her rocky coast rising boldly from the water, lay to our left. We were a little north of Cape Kremidhi, the northern point of the sweep forming the bay of Palea Monemvasia; the southern side of which is formed by the island Monemvasia; which, if the *Minoa* of Pausanias, was, in his time, a portion of a promontory, and since rendered an island by the working of the waves.

The Bay of Nauplia or Argolis, now burst upon our sight. Between two and three miles inland from the head of the gulf lies the modern Argos; which Gell considers to stand exactly on the

site of the ancient city. How noble the view from mount Larissa—its Acropolis. The waters of that gulf, the silvery flood of which the bark of Danaus first cleaved nigh four thousand years ago, flying with his fifty daughters the Egyptian coast, lave the shores of the wide Argolic plain, framed in magnificent mountains; teeming with classical associations of surpassing lustre; and traversed by that mysterious stream the Inachus, feigned by the Mythic-loving poets to gush from Amphilochian Pindus, water Acarnania with its grateful flood, then dive beneath the bed of the Ambracian gulf to rise again in Argolis.

The eastern sea was speckled with the clustering Cyclades—Melos, Siphnos, Seriphos, Cythnos —in the foreground, with their bold cliffs, and deeply indented shores; whilst Polycandros, Paros, and others of the isles of Greece, appeared like soft clouds in the distance; an aspect given them by the mirage, so common in these seas; a white belt of haze girding the lower portions, whilst the high land seems to float in air. The island of the Spezziotes, whose fireships and valour taught the Turk to abhor them equally with the Hydriot and Ispariot patriots, rose on our left. Spezzia contends with Hydra the palm for female beauty. The bravest and most beautiful of Greece are the offspring of these rocks.

The latter we ran close by, and saw her little capital nestled midst her cloud-capped cliffs. The ancients left this island, as nature evidently intended it, a resort for the cormorant and the wild seamew, rather than for man. But *Liberty* hailed it for a resting-place! Is its name derived from its numerous headlands, capes, and summits? The hundred-headed monster of Lake Lerna was not more invincible. Entering the Saronic Gulf, we gazed where stretching far away into the Ægean Sea, lay Sunium's Promontory. Standing amidst the silence of desolation, the marble columns of Minerva's shrine, a noble landmark for the mariners of Greece, are reflected in the watery mirror far below. Swiftly pursuing our course, leaving Ægina on our left, the shores of Attica close at hand upon our right, far inland two lofty and peculiar heights, rising from the plain, attracted our attention, pronouncing themselves the Acropolis of Athens and Mount Lycabettus. Yes! the citadel of Athens was in view, and a bright sun shining on its lofty rock, revealed even at that distance some portion of its jewelled crown, some portion of its precious burthen, magnificent monuments to by-gone Idolatry. The entrance of the harbour of the Piræus is excessively narrow, so that we could hardly imagine that so large a ship as the Geyser could venture in. From the great clearness of the water, you are led to

suppose it very shallow, yet were we told it was fifteen fathom deep where I should have deemed it no more than six or seven, so deceptive is it in appearance.

If we were astonished at the Geyser's entering, how much more so were we upon beholding the Howe, of 120 guns, one of our most noble ships, lying within the basin. Clarke, the traveller, mentions, as an extraordinary event in the history of the Piræus, that his brother brought the Braakel, an English frigate, to an anchor within this port, "but not," says he, "without considerable damage to the ship." Sir Francis Mason brought the Howe in with every sail set, and assumed an air of offended dignity when I one day asked him, in the innocency of my heart, "if she was towed in?" Two Russian and a French corvette were also lying here, as well as several Greek barques, and a steamer. The Russians were beautiful crafts, built, like many of the Russian navy, from English models; the red jackets of their crew are anti-nautical to an English eye, too much of the pipe-clay air about them altogether; in fact, when not actually at sea, they are no longer sailors, but stiff, starched, braced-up soldiers, drilling and manœuvring on shore in strict military style. Numerous caiques crowded about us, as swinging round, we took up a berth near the Howe. The gay and novel costumes of the Greek boat-

men were very striking; some in the neat Hydriot dress, and others with their scarlet jackets slashed with gold, and long blue-tasselled caps of red cloth. A boat pulled off to us from the Howe, as also from the Frenchman, immediately we were anchored; from the latter issued a dapper, straight-laced "very pretty man," who, after a few courteous speeches, and inquiries for news, stepped delicately again into his boat and returned. Admiral Sir Francis Mason, accompanied by Lady Mason, and our Minister at Athens, Sir Edmund Lyons, now came off to us from Her Majesty's ship Howe; marines and crew drawn up on deck, they were received with the ceremony usual on such occasions. My friend, Mr. Woodhead, was acquainted with Sir Edmund Lyons, and we were also presented to Sir Francis Mason, and received from him at the same time an invitation to dine on board the Howe the following Wednesday. The Greek caiques were so pertinacious in crowding round, endeavouring to hold intercourse with our crew, that the long-boat was sent out to keep them off, whilst every now and then a six pound shot was pitched from the deck into their frail barks when the opportunity offered. These vagaries served to amuse us until the dinner hour, for our generous hosts would not hear of our going on shore that night. In the evening, private theatricals were going on on board the Frenchman;

the officers of the Geyser were invited to attend, but declined.

Of the three ancient ports, Munychia, Phalerum, and Piræus, the latter is the only one now frequented; it is the most western of the three, and offers a deep basin, well defended from winds.

CHAPTER IV.

ATHENS.

Leave Geyser for Athens.—Long walls.—Reach Athens.—New Palace.—Honey of Hymettus.—Temple of Jupiter Olympus.—Ilissus.—Acropolis.—Cecrops.—Herodes Atticus.—Temple of Theseus.—Pnyx.—Areopagus.

On Tuesday, 25th, for the first time pressed we the soil of Greece. Several officers of the Geyser and one of the Howe joined us for Athens; the distance from the Piræus to that city being about five miles, we deemed it well to take advantage of some very unclassical looking vehicles, much like badly-built hackney-coaches standing on the quay. On the right hand side of the first portion of the way to Athens from the Piræus, lying near the road, are remains and foundations of those long walls, which, commenced by Themistocles, but interfered with by his banishment, 492 years before Christ, were carried on afterwards by Cimon and Pericles; the latter, B. C. 444, adding a third. Thus was Athens, as Wordsworth observes, "like a vessel moored by two cables, each of which dropped its anchor in the Piræus." The last or third of these cables "dropped its anchor" in the Port Phalerum.

Soon after, leaving the wretched collection of houses forming the town of the Piræus, we traversed a marshy plain, where I observed many of the common English lapwing, and several buzzards. Corn land then appeared, with here and there an olive ground; about the latter were swarms of wild blue pigeons. The Greeks have a curious notion, that with a flock of wild pigeons there is always one white one, which they tell you is the Queen. I was told this by a Greek at Athens, and also again by one of the same nation in Egypt. About a mile and a half from the Piræus is a monument to those sons of Greece slaughtered by the Turks in 1827, when Lord Cochrane and General Church bravely, but it is said rashly, endeavoured to take Athens by a *coup de main*, which failed, and the Turkish cavalry, catching them at an advantage on this open plain, committed considerable havoc. A vale lies upon the left; it is the vale of Cephissus! At a kind of halfway house, our charioteer thought it necessary to indulge in a cup of coffee and a pipe, served by a smooth-faced Greek, in the Hydriot costume, who earnestly entreated us to do the same. It was a strange medley within—Athenians, Albanians, Hydriots, French sailors, and not the least curious of them all, British tars; the latter evidently bent upon amusing themselves with the outlandish craft surrounding them. Not allowing our charioteer to enjoy his pipe in peace, we, hastening on, drew near to the ancient seat of Minerva, passed

within sight of the beautiful temple of Theseus, the work of Cimon the son of Miltiades, B. C. 476, and one of the most beautiful and perfect monuments of Athenian glory, beheld the Olive Groves of the Academy, and entering the ragged streets of the modern Athens, saw before us a huge ungainly structure, of white Pentelic marble, glaring in the sun. This was the new palace, for the erection and embellishment of which, King Otho is racking his wretched subjects with taxes and heavy imposts. The "Hotel de France," our destination, stands in a square space fronting the Royal edifice. Shewn into a bare unfurnished room, soon were we gathered round a table in the centre, with everything edible upon it that the house could afford: bottles of London porter, wines of France and Greece were there, as also honey from Hymettus,—"the enjoyment of which prolongeth the existence," said the ancients; for they considered it the greatest preservative of health; the oil pressed from the Athenian olive, externally used, alone vied in virtue with the honey of Hymettus, applied internally; Dr. Clarke says, "This honey has in truth a peculiar healing quality, arising from the flowers the bee chiefly culls it from, viz., the *thymus serpyllum*, *salina pomifera*, and *salvia verbascum:* all of which abound on Hymettus." Pausanias, when he tells us that the Hymettian bees are surpassed by the Halizonian bees, surely refers alone to the amiability of the latter, which "are so gentle

that they will go foraging along with men." The honey of the Halizonian bee cannot be superior to that of the industrious inhabitants of Hymettus, the flavour of which is indeed a delightful perfume! Strolling forth from the hotel, our first object was the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, the magnificent remains of which stand on the north border of the Ilissus, not far from the supposed site of the Lyceum, and south-east of the Acropolis. The stream of the Ilissus no longer bubbles forth from its fountain in Hymettus to pursue its rippling course to the Piræus; for rocks, rubble, and rubbish now choke its bed. Women were washing old garments in the fountain of "Callirrhoe," a scene bringing to my mind the fountain of Arethusa at Syracuse, which, having pictured to myself a bubbling spring of pellucid water, I found a pool thick and offensive, and rendered still more so by scores of washer-women, corrupting the air with their slang, as freely as they did the water of the sacred fountain, with their abominations.

How noble are the remains of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus! Sixteen fluted Corinthian columns of Phrygian marble, rising sixty feet in air, stand here in ruined majesty. Well might those indeed who planned such noble works "be admired in the assembly of the gods for their wisdom and excellence!"

Five hundred and thirty years before our era that illustrious tyrant, Pisistratus, laid the foundations

of this gigantic structure. Six hundred and sixty-five years afterwards a Roman emperor completed it. That same emperor who raised an image to Jupiter where Jesus rose from the dead, and a like monument to Venus where the Redeemer suffered! Adrian. After spending an hour or more upon the banks of the Ilissus, tilled for lentils and corn on the city side, but on the other barren and stony, we returned to the hotel, and sat down a large party to dinner, having invited our late hosts, the officers of the Geyser, and one or two of the Howe to dine with us that day. Bad champagne and claret, with well-resined Greek wines of various sorts, appeared; but finding little favour in our sight, we soon adjourned up stairs again to fill our chibouks, cut from the wooded sides of snow-capped Parnassus, with the finest Gebelee tobacco, lately brought from Egypt by a noble countryman, who, on his way home from India, had just arrived at Athens, and joined our carouse. The following day we visited the Acropolis, and, having attained the summit of its lofty rock, found a guard stationed near a little portal, the modern entrance to the Athenian citadel. A soldier accompanied us within this door, keeping with us to see that no sculptured fragments from the ruined seat of the great Minerva were purloined. Six Doric columns point out the site of the once splendid Propylæa, to the right of which a lofty building of Turkish structure now stands, towering

above the little Temple of Victory, so long concealed beneath a massive battery, but, thanks to the labours of the Archæological Society of Athens, lately restored to sight and form, as far as it has been possible to do so, without those fragments of its frieze hidden in the British Museum.

Before us we now beheld, upon the loftiest point of the Acropolis, that temple, the architecture of which so well designated the purity of that goddess to whom it was dedicated. Raised by the Olympian* Pericles, above four centuries before Christ; beautified by the chisel of Phidias; the Parthenon crowned the Cecropian rock, the most chaste and magnificent of all her temples. Two-and-twenty hundred years have since passed on; the Parthenon still stands, of all the ruined works of man the most celebrated; competed with by none indeed, unless by those noble piles at Pæstum, in Lucania. A destruction-freighted shell, fired in 1687, by some barbarous Venetian, from the summit of lofty Lycabettus, dropped upon the powder magazine of the Acropolis, and sadly marred the beauty of this shrine; then trembled its mighty pedestal of rock from its summit to its base, columns were shivered, altars rent, and the purest workmanship of Athens's noblest sculptors for ever destroyed. Christians, barbarous in their zeal,—Turks, always and by nature barbarous,—war, time, and atmosphere,

* So designated from his eloquence, like the thunder and lightning of Olympus.

have alike, age after age, combined to decompose the beauty of this temple. But was the indignation of the shade of Phidias ever more excited than by that spoliator, who, under the disguise of contributing to the advancement of art, ravaged the richest portion of the sculptor's studio, bearing away into far countries, fragments, the merit of which, detached and disunited from the whole, could never be duly appreciated? Athenian apathy is now, however, aroused to a sense of the benefit to be derived from these remains of ancient Athens, by the great influx of foreigners attracted by them; therefore, at the present day, a more jealous guard is preserved over them than formerly. And upon the summit of the Cecropian rock, the industry and value of the Society I have before referred to as recovering the Temple of Victory is well exemplified, for many a lost statue, many a valuable fragment rich with sculpture or inscription, have they discovered; and in an open space, which they with infinite labour have cleared of rubbish, are these precious memorials of ancient Greece arranged for view; some of them surpassingly beautiful, all worthy of examination and study. Nine-and-twenty columns of the Parthenon are still remaining. Amongst the fallen fragments is one large piece of a broken shaft of "verde antique," from which I bore away a memento of our visit to the temple of the virgin goddess. The Erecthæum, dedicated to Neptune and Minerva

Polias, was the object of our next visit. Pass within the beautiful caryatid portico of that double temple, and you may behold where the spring gushed out at the stroke of Neptune's trident; where the emblem of fertility and peace, the olive tree, sprung forth at the voice of the goddess; and where, moreover, stood the most sacred of all her statues, the handiwork of the gods themselves, sculptured from the wood of that most valued tree, and presented to the Athenians from the gates of heaven. Behind this temple stood the public treasury of Athens.

The sun fiercely reflecting from the surrounding masses of marble, gladly sat we down to rest ourselves, and gaze from this tabular rock upon the plain, one hundred and fifty feet below us. Wisely did the Egyptian wanderer fix upon this height, strong in natural fortification, as a gathering point for the then dispersed and little heeded natives of Attica. A lofty rock, abruptly rising from the plain, presented a glorious site for a city in those days, secure from hostile bands, and from inundation. The devastating floods of Ogyges and Deucalion were still present in the minds of men. Calling the wild Atticans from mountain fastnesses and sterile plains, Cecrops bestowed upon them a form of government; raised in their hearts a reverence for gods, that their souls, impregnated with a superstitious fervour for the defence of shrines and altars built in honour of those mysterious powers called *gods*, might give

birth to a more devoted courage for the defence of their country; that zealous courage which a form of religion to defend alone creates. Thus did Cecrops prepare a field for the cultivation of those seeds of greatness and ambition which he had planted in their breasts, and which afterwards sprung forth, rendering them a mighty nation, and their city the Heliopolis of Europe—the favoured place of wisdom and philosophy. Again, their Egyptian founder taught them how to navigate the "Great Sea," to bring from distant lands their fruits, so that corn and olives flourished where before was barren rock; Attica thus was internally enabled to sustain an efficient population, to defend the honour of the gods that he had given her; so that when the hero Theseus appeared upon the stage of Attica some three hundred years after, looking forth from the Cecropian citadel, he beheld a plain not devoid of inhabitants or cultivation; and upon the foundation laid by Cecrops, Athens rose, and the wild Atticans became refined Athenians!

Descending from our rocky and commanding seat, we visited the theatre of *Herodes Atticus*,—that citizen, a descendant of gods and heroes, who, living in the age of the Antonines, groaned in poverty until fortune, shewing him a hidden treasure, enabled him to prove his generous nature and his patriotic spirit. The virtuous Nerva perceived the heart of the man he had before him, when, cautiously exclaiming, "I know not how to

use so vast a treasure," he answered him, " Abuse it then, for it is your own."

The great historian of Rome fails not to tell us how, shunning a public life and the flattery of imperial favour, Herodes rather chose to spend his days in philosophic retirement at Athens, where after his death many munificent monuments of patriotism and liberality reminded the Athenians of their loss. Pausanias does not neglect to record his bounteous and costly deeds of generosity.

Of all the ancient monuments at Athens, the Temple of Theseus, which we next visited, appears to me the most graceful and most striking in its beauty; standing apart from all other buildings, you see it to great advantage. Four-and-thirty Doric columns and its walls remain entire. Built by Cimon, son of Miltiades, four hundred and seventy-six years before Christ, it is even of more venerable age than the Parthenon itself. Theseus ascended the throne of Athens B. C. 1235; his remains Cimon brought from the scene of his exile, the Isle of Scyros, and beneath this graceful structure of Pentelic marble the Athenians laid his adored ashes. To the south-west of this temple we found "the Pnyx," where the public assemblies of the Athenians were held; it is a platform hewn out in the rock; the Bema for the orator still may be seen looking towards the Agora, or public place of Athens. " This," says Wordsworth, " was the throne from which the Olympian Pericles fulmined over Greece.

The Athenian orator spoke from a block of bare stone; his audience sat before him on a blank and open field." The hill of the Areopagus lies within a short distance between the Pnyx and the Acropolis; a limestone rock, where sat the most sacred and venerable tribunal in all Greece, a council composed wholly of those of high quality and unsullied purity of life: "Nor was it enough that their lives were strictly innocent and unblameable, but something more was required of them, their countenances, words, actions, and all their behaviour must be composed, serious, and grave to a degree beyond what is expected of other men;" and "to laugh was an unpardonable error, and to write a comedy forbidden by particular precept of the law." Impiety of all sorts they took cognisance of, especially of blasphemy against the gods, and, that which was considered almost as great a crime,—idleness! This latter crime, as others, after the breaking up of the venerable assembly, increased, to the destruction of Athenian morals; it appears, indeed, that in St. Paul's time the criminality of idleness was wholly out of mind, "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in *nothing else* but either to tell or to hear some new thing." It was from this rostrum of naked rock, canopied by the heavens alone, that the zealous apostle, "stirred up in spirit when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry," poured forth with divinely-inspired eloquence his declaration of the

"Unknown God." Gazing forth upon the innumerable temples and altars around him, rendered rich and surpassingly splendid by the lavish hand of art, to the glory of *their* gods, he declared to them, that "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" and "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Thus then did the champion of the one true God stand forth in the midst of "Mars' Hill" and boldly upbraid the men of Athens, crowding with their thousands in the wide space of the Agora before him; and thus did he publicly and forcibly express his contempt for their holy mysteries, their temples, and their altars, blaspheming their gods, daring the wrath of the people and the senate, "setting forth strange gods;" preaching unto them Jesus and the resurrection, from the very Areopagus itself!

CHAPTER V.

ATHENS.

Visit Her Majesty's ship Howe.—Sea gulls.—Hill of Musæus.—Temple of Æsculapius.—Athenian dogs.—Pipes, tobacco, and custom of smoking in the East.—A day's cock-shooting on Pentelicus.—Marble of Pentelicus and Hymettus.

A RAW and bitter wind was blowing strongly from the north-east, when on the following day we found ourselves once more at the Piræus on our way to dine on board the Howe. Stepping into a boat sent for us from the ship, the oars fell, and we were soon on deck surveying the noble vessel. She had at this time her full complement of men on board; but from her beautifully clean appearance, and the prime order everything was in, who could believe that one thousand Jack tars were daily tramping about her decks? The Admiral crowned his hospitality by presenting us with letters for different parts, and, amongst others, one to the Bishop of Jerusalem. Upon the table in the state cabin lay a piece of the foundation rock of the Anglican church then in progress in the Holy City. I had here the opportunity of observing a curious testimony of the sagacity of the sea gull. The

moment the bell rang for the men's dinner, though before, hardly one of these birds was in view, hundreds appeared gathering around the ship; and I was assured, that regularly as the bell rang, this ornithological phenomenon took place immediately; and great is the wheeling and screaming of the expectant birds when the first cargo of the remnants of the feast appear.

About nine o'clock, p.m., we returned again to Athens, delighted with that courtesy and hospitality for which our navy is renowned. The wind still blew fiercely, and the following morning it was nothing allayed, either in bitterness or strength; so that, although we mounted to the Acropolis once more, we could but leave with joy its exposed height, for the Athenian plain below; not refraining, however, from mounting a neighbouring eminence—the hill of Musæus; so named from the disciple of Orpheus, who lived, it is supposed, some 1400 years before our Saviour. From this summit is a noble prospect of the bay of Salamis, backed by the mountains of the Morea, many of them at this time white with snow. Of the monument to the Roman Consul, but Attican, Philopappus, which crowns this hill, there is but a remnant left. Caverns are shewn nigh the base of the mount, and these, you are informed, were the dungeons of Socrates; where that choice spirit which spent its energy in confounding sophists, and in withering the weeds which choked the path of

true philosophy, calmly awaited the return of the annual mission to the sacred Delos, then winged its way to that immortality, the enjoyment of which it had always inculcated as the sure reward of virtue.*

In the midst of the town of Athens is a single column, sole remaining portion of a temple which once stood there, sacred to the god of physic; Æsculapius. The sons and daughters of Greece, within its neighbourhood, when struck with fever or other dire disease, flock here, and sticking rags, thread, or hair upon the shaft, depart, fully persuaded that a due portion of virtue has passed into them to heal their affliction. Quantities of such offerings were now upon the stone, affixed with little dabs of wax. Long hairs predominated, which I at first deemed left there as a "votiva tabella" from a horse's tail, but found on examination that they were from some fair Greek's head. The god is somewhat greedy in taking fees, indeed the patient has no chance of cure unless he remembers to drop a piece of money into a crevice in the wall of a little chapel close at hand. Thus, as usual, is superstition encouraged by priests and made a profit of.

Let him who wanders in the neighbourhood of Athens beware of the large and powerful race of

* The ship in which Theseus had borne away the victims redeemed from the Cretan Minotaur was yearly sent to Delos with thanksgivings to Apollo, and all executions were respited until its return.

dogs, with long coats and bushy tails, which infest her districts, and whenever opportunity occurs dissipate in the most summary manner all those classical ruminations which naturally invade the breast of him who breathes Athenian atmosphere. Wandering one day upon the banks of Ilissus, two of these fearful brutes came at us open-mouthed, following us with such pertinacity, that it was with the greatest difficulty that we managed to retreat unscathed to a commanding mass of rock, where, with our guns pointed at their heads, we shouted to their owner to call them off before we were driven to fire; an act we were rather wary of committing, as the penalty for shooting one of them obliges you to give the owner as much corn as will cover the dog when held up by the tail full stretch with its nose upon the ground; and a heavy penalty it is on account of the great size of these animals; yet may you kill them, it is said, with a sword without incurring this fine; for then close quarters and necessity are implied. Many buzzards circled above our heads during this skirmish, as if in full expectation of coming in for the jackal's share at last. Perhaps, however, they were more particularly gathered together to consult the entrails of a cow which was hanging up by the heels before an Athenian butcher a short distance off, the offal from which several of these loathsome birds were deeply consulting, and seemed to find the augury propitious.

The stalls at Athens are stocked with pipe-sticks

made of the blackthorn from Parnassus; the average length they are cut being from three and a-half to four feet. Cherry sticks and jasmine imported from Trebizond upon the Black Sea to Constantinople, and from thence to Greece, are generally of much greater length; indeed, I have since seen one of jasmine at Constantinople, which was sixteen feet long and quite straight; but this was something peculiar, and a gentleman of the Belgian Court purchased it as a present for his King. In Athens you see but few of those gorgeous amber mouth-pieces which you meet with farther east; amongst the lower orders frequently none of any kind is used, or perhaps a cheap bone one. Indeed, many prefer smoking without any; for by placing the mouth to the aperture of the stick itself a much larger whiff is obtained of the tobacco smoke; and again, the little wooden tube, which, passing through the mouth-piece connects it with the pipe-stick, quickly becomes unpleasant from the oil deposited, and it is therefore necessary to be continually changing it. The trade in amber with Constantinople has very much decreased of late, I was informed by a young Prussian merchant, on account of the mouth-piece being less in vogue, as well as on account of the Sultan's not being addicted to smoking. This young merchant had, however, with him at the time above £20,000 worth of that precious substance, gathered from the shores of the Baltic for the

Turkish market. It was at Athens that we first saw the common oriental vase water-pipes; the kind most used in the public cafés is the *goseh*, the bowl for which containing the water is formed of a cocoa-nut shell, with a short cane tube fixed into it, through which the smoke is drawn, instead of the long flexible tube which is attached to the glass water-pipe called the *sheesheh*. The tobacco smoked in these pipes is from Persia, and called *tumbak*, and is coarse and very strong unless smoked through water, and even then before being put into the cup of the pipe for use, it is necessary to have it well washed and squeezed, until a quantity of black oil runs from it. The strong inhalation necessary to produce the vacuum above the water in the vase, rendered the smoking of this kind of pipe unpleasant to me; for you literally "drink tobacco," as the Turkish expression for smoking signifies; a great portion of the smoke passing into your lungs. Orientals, however, delight in this, and letting the vapour ramble about in their internals for a time, then recall it, but still loth to part with it, often obstinately keep the mouth closed, thus forcing it to fly in beautiful jets from the nostrils. It is a pleasant thing to see the venerable Moslem perched on a gorgeous cushion, draw through a costly mouthpiece the luxurious whiff, and swallowing it, await the effect with a dignified gravity, for several moments; then, with a sigh, *sub imo pectore*, thus send it forth in spiral volumes from his nose.

Tobacco appears to have been introduced into Turkey later than with us, for old Sandys, travelling in 1610, after speaking of opium-chewing as then much admired in Turkey for its exhilirating qualities, says, "Perhaps for the self-same cause, they also delight in tobacco, which they take through reeds which have joined unto them great heads of wood to contain it; I doubt not as lately taught them as brought them by the English, and were it not sometimes looked into, (for Morat Bassa not long since commanded a pipe to be thrust through the nose of a Turk, and so to be led in derision through the city,) no question but t'would prove a principal commodity. Nevertheless they will take it in corners, and are so ignorant therein, that that which in England is not saleable, doth pass here amongst them as most excellent."

It was about three o'clock on the morning of the 28th, that two figures, each with a double-barrelled gun strapped across his shoulders, issued forth cold and shivering from the door of the hotel at Athens, and mounting wretched nags, beckoned in silence to a tall thin being costumed in a loose scarlet jacket with pendant sleeves, large blue bag trousers drawn in around the knees, with grey buskins below; whilst a very long musket, with a large bell-shaped muzzle, was suspended by a belt from his left shoulder. This strangely accoutred being mounting a third horse, struck his heels into its flanks, and dashed

on ahead, calling to him at the same time with a wild shrill cry, three dogs of a most ignoble pedigree. For he was nothing more or less than a Greek cacciatore, whom we had engaged the night before to take us to the foot of Pentelicus, that we might upon its myrtle-clad slopes shoot woodcocks, and meditate upon that mountain from the bowels of which Athens sprung forth.

It blew hard, and was intensely cold, but the sky was pretty clear, and radiant with stars; yet was the darkness such that riding across the open space opposite the new Royal Palace, our guide became so confused by deep dykes cut for foundations of buildings, and heaps of stones, marble, and other building materials strewed around, that we in some places were compelled to dismount, and almost despaired of getting into the proper track again. Taking a north-eastern direction, we traversed the plain of Athens, cultivated with corn and olive-grounds; many of the olive-trees being of the most venerable age, as denoted by their split and hollow trunks, perforated and twisted in the style so peculiar to that tree. The northern base of Hymettus now lay upon our right, for we were upon the plain betwixt it and the southern foot of Pentelicus. A change suddenly came over the face of the morning; her star, which had risen with the most astonishing brilliancy, now only burst forth at intervals as masses of black and stormy-looking clouds passed betwixt us and it; the mountains became veiled in heavy mists, and a drenching rain descended as we drew near Pente-

licus, entirely putting out of the question any hope of visiting its summit. We therefore halted upon a plain nigh the south-western base of the mountain, clothed with myrtle, arbutus, and juniper, with here and there a pine-tree rearing its bare stem and dark mass of foliage high in air. Numerous and deep gullies intersect this plain with streams of water at the bottom, overhung with evergreens and oleander. A woodcock suddenly sprung from beneath our horses' feet as we rode on; so esteeming it a good spot there to commence the day's crusade, we dismounting, tied our horses to some myrtle-bushes; wrung our dripping garments, and were ready to begin operations. Not so, however, our wretched dogs, which refusing to face the weather, sought shelter beneath the bushes; every dog beneath his own juniper-tree; neither would all our efforts entice them forth; so that after several hours' walking, and making the cacciatore do their work by throwing stones amongst the masses of evergreen, we returned to our horses again empty-handed, and thoroughly wet through.

The whole of this plain is one most beautiful shrubbery, and in fine seasons, when the glorious sun is shining and the birds warbling on all sides, it must indeed be a spot of unearthly beauty. The bold ridge of the frontier mountains of Northern Attica are seen from hence; but a sacrifice being offered to Jupiter Pluvius upon the heights of "vine-clad Parnes," shrouded from our

sight the form of his gigantic altar. In spite of the rough weather, several large falcons were skimming over the plain in search of prey, and one coming within shot I pulled the trigger, but the percussion cap was damp, and the noble bird did not suffer for his unwary flight.

Now turning our faces towards Athens, onward we dashed, through bogs and pools of water, traversing the plain by another course than that by which we had entered it; a dwarf species of rosemary, with tufts of long rank grass, grew thickly beneath our feet, and evergreens were scattered here and there. It was night before we dismounted at the door of the hotel, benumbed with the excessive cold, and not very satisfied with our first day's cock shooting in Attica; but hoping for a more propitious season for the ascent of Pentelicus, we soon were wrapt in sleep, forgetful of the trials of the day.

Hymettus produces marble, but its flower-decked slopes and rocky cavities, rich with the pure honey of its bees, were more beloved by the nymphs, the pastoral Apollo, and the sylvan Pan, than by those who worked their forms in marble; more attractive to the Attic shepherd than to Phidias or Praxitiles. The echo of the rustic pipe and the pastoral strain oftener resounded amidst its grottoes than that of the hammer and the chisel; for the marble of Hymettus, is not like the pure and delicate Pentetic, but clouded with a tint of greyish blue.

CHAPTER VI.

ATHENS.

Excursion to Eleusis.—Groves of the Academy.—Defile of Daphne.—Reach Eleusis.—View from the hill above.—Battle of Salamis.—Evil eye.—Return to Athens.—Dine at British Ambassador's house.—Marriage ceremony.—Modern Athens.

THE night proved rough and stormy as the day preceding. What with sighing gusts, pattering rain, and the eternal rattling of a stove in the middle of our room, it required pressing invitations from fatigue to cajole sleep.

> "Thus passed the night so foul, till morning fair
> Came forth with pilgrim steps in amice grey,
> Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar
> Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds." *

It was, indeed, quite a vernal morning, and joyfully we hailed it, for we had ordered horses to be ready for us betimes for an excursion to the city of mysteries, "Eleusis," about eleven miles to the west of Athens. Neither were we doomed to a lonely ride, for the shade of Plato was startled with the voice of merriment, as we traversed the olive-groves of the Academy, by no means at the

* Milton, Par. Reg.

measured pace of an Eleusinian procession, but at a regular good English gallop, our horses' heels rattling over, perhaps, the very line of the "*via sacra*" annually passed by those solemn trains. We were a party of five, Capt. Macdonald, the Misses Ashford, and ourselves; before us rode a Greek in full costume.

When in B. C. 86 the ambitious Mithridates, not content with flooding Asia Minor with the blood of Rome and her vassals, spread his devastating power into Europe, and dared to grasp at Greece, Lucius Cornelius Scylla led on his cohorts, still reeking from the bloody struggle with the baseborn but intrepid Caius Marius, to stem the progress of the King of Pontus. And he who did not hesitate to despoil the sacred shrine at Delphi, thought less of cutting down the Academic groves to batter the walls of the rebellious Athenians with the venerable trunks of those sacred trees, which time out of mind had canopied the philosophers of Greece. Yes! the hallowed groves of Attica fell beneath his ruthless axe, and with them fell the "antique town of Theseus." Yet are there many ancient trees still standing in Academia, chiefly olives, with worn and twisted stems; overshadowing ground at this time cultivated with corn and other crops. Crossing the valley of the Cephissus, we mounted the lofty hill of Ægaleos, from whence looking back the traveller beholds a noble scene; Athens and its plain, with its mountain back-

ground; the calm expanse of the deep blue sea; and craggy Peloponnessus. Lofty cliffs, clothed with myrtle and arbutus, now shut us in on either hand, as, passing on, we entered the beautiful "Defile of Daphne."

A monastery, ruined, and very picturesque, stood upon our left; there are also remains of a theatre, with temples to Apollo and to Venus nigh at hand. Lovely peeps of the Gulf of Salamis led us to halt at times with exclamations of delight at the beautiful character of the scenery, as at each wind of the defile it burst afresh upon our sight. And now we arrived at the embouchure of the pass, into that sacred plain, on the western confines of which, upon a mound, is perched the modern village of Eleusis. Leaving upon our right the salt water pools, remnants of those channels mentioned by Pausanias, as the ancient boundaries of the Eleusinian and Attican lands, and from the waters of which none but the priests might take the fish, sacred to Proserpine and Ceres, we passed on across the Thriesian, and soon reached the Rharium plain, extending around the base of the hill upon which the celebrated Temple of Ceres stood. Upon this plain was grown the barley of which those cakes were made, which were especially intended for offerings to the goddess, because there it was, according to the ancients, that seeds were first sown and fruits increased. Nigh at hand stood extensive remains of an

aqueduct, and fragments of marble were strewed around, some of them bearing ancient inscriptions.

We now had reached the foot of that hill, once graced with the most sacred of all shrines to the honour of Ceres; a temple as renowned for its beauty of architecture without, as it was venerated for those sacred mysteries which took place within, of all rites the most solemn and mysterious observed in Greece; rites which, if divulged by the initiated, called down upon him the wrath of the gods, the hatred of man, a dreadful and destructive curse upon himself and upon his whole house. Pausanias would have divulged them, but, "he was restrained by a vision in a dream." For one thousand eight hundred years the ceremonies survived, until virtuous Theodosius Magnus, in his zeal for the progress of Christianity, suppressed them in the fourth century after Christ.

Miserable huts, filled with wretched inhabitants, now mark the site of the city which possessed that temple, to which kings and philosophers alike resorted, bowing down with reverential awe to that mysterious deity, the site of whose favoured altar is now so desecrated. A ragged dirty village, situate upon the eastern base and slope of the venerated hill, represents Eleusis; and amidst its filth may be found fragments of frieze of capitals and columns, cut with the chisel of well-skilled sculptors, poor remnants of the temple that once enshrined the statue of the goddess. Clarke seems

to have discovered that very statue—and in what a situation—engulphed in a dunghill! This, however, seemed intended as a compliment to the goddess; for that traveller observes, "The inhabitants of this village still regarded this statue with a very high degree of superstitious veneration." To a common observer this might be deemed a most ambiguous method of showing veneration; but a stronger proof could not be given, for so surely did they rely on the virtue contained in this prostrate image of the goddess, that its very touch they thought endued with surprising fertility the manure heaped about it. Thus ousted from her proper temple, they raised her one of dung. Dr. Clarke, however, tore her from her humble shrine, and, amidst the curses of men, women, and children, inhabitants of the surrounding plain, robbed them of what they deemed the cause of the fertility around Eleusis.

Arrived at the summit of the hill whereon the temple stood, we sat and gazed across that gulf, upon the bosom of which above four hundred years before the Christian era, three hundred and eighty triremes of Greece strove with a thousand Persian ships and smote them. There lay the Isle of Salamis; girt with the bright waters of its gulf, calm as a lake, glistening like a mirror, land-locked and beautiful. The proud Persian trembled on his mountain throne of ivory and gold upon Ægaleos, as overlooking this same

spot the echoing shouts of conquest rung upon his ear; and, as gazing forward with dismay, he beheld the waters of Salamis studded with the wrecks of his ambition; the crippled remnants of his once magnificent fleet flying towards the wide expanse of the Ægæan sea, chased by the iron-beaked galleys of Athens and her allies. The martial pæan which had roused the echoes of Salamis, Træzen, and Ægina was now responded to by a chorus of mirth and victory, proceeding from the mouths of Athenian women and children, transported thither for safety. Smoke still ascended from the ruins of their beloved city, and the rock of the Acropolis was dyed with the blood of its defenders: but the Persian had fled for Asia again; and vultures, gorged with food, were on his track.

Mardonius, with the shattered remains of those millions, who, surrounded with women, eunuchs, and luxurious revelry, had entered Greece; was now driven back to pass a rigid winter amidst the mountains of Thessaly and Macedonia!

Athens had never yielded earth and water to the Persian heralds. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, had demanded it; but though Thebes, Ægina, and many other towns, tremblingly submitted to the insult, Athens and Lacedæmon proudly repelled it.

The sun was now high in the heavens, diffusing a delightful warmth; it was a day, indeed, recalling to our minds those delicious hours that now

and then we have in England in the month of May; cheering days, when the flowers budding forth, every breath of air is laden with incense, and the birds venture to hail with their joyful notes, the coming spring.

Crowds of children surrounded us as we sat upon the hill of Eleusis, partly, I presume, gathered together to satisfy their curiosity by gazing on us, and partly with the hope of sharing some oranges and bread we had brought with us. One dirty little son of Greece was adorned with a skull-cap, composed of coins strung together so as to lap one over the other in circles round his head, whilst a row of small white cowries ornamented the edge. The coins were chiefly Turkish, but amongst them were gold Venetian pieces and some ancient silver ones, but a hideous-looking hag, who seemed to be his mother, would not allow us to examine it very closely, fearing, perhaps, the influence of the "evil eye;" and though we offered her a considerable sum, she seemed to deem it preposterous to dream of selling so valuable a charm; for the presence of these coins and cowries is considered amongst the Grecians, as amongst the Egyptians, to counteract the effects of the evil eye; one might certainly suppose that the abominably dirty state of the wearers would prove quite a sufficient antidote; and it is indeed with the hope that such may prove the case, that children are left so generally in that filthy state which excites the disgust of the traveller.

In Egypt, amulets, such as shells, coins, and beads, are continually worked up in the harness of camels, donkeys, and other animals for the same intention. And thus it was with the ancient Greeks, who appear to have been deeply imbued with the idea that a malign influence proceeded from the eyes of the envious, injurious to the object observed by them, whether man or beast; which led Plutarch to observe, that there were certain persons whose eyes were destructive to children, "by reason of weak and tender constitutions of body, but that over men, grown up and confirmed in strength, the power of the evil eye had far less influence." Bracelets and necklaces of corals and particular stones were much used by the ancients, as also peculiar herbs and magic rites, to avert this evil influence, and a thousand instances might be cited to prove how prevalent this superstitious feeling was amongst them, and how indeed amongst the moderns of all nations it still prevails in some degree. In Italy the *Cattivo ócchio* has its terrors; neither is the belief in the fascinating and injurious tendency of the eye wholly lost in our own country. In Arabia I have often seen charms suspended on the necks of camels, and ridden them, adorned by their Bedouin owners with strings of garlic roots, which they consider a most efficacious remedy. Old Gerarde, in his "Historie of Plantes," saith, "Some, as Camerarius writeth, hang the roote of the garlic about the necks of their cattell, being

fallne blind, by what occasion soeuer it happen, and persuade themselves that by this meanes they will recouer sight. Those that worke in the mines of Germany affirme, that they find this roote very powerfull in defending them from the assaults of impure spirits or deuils, which often in such places are troublesome unto them." In Syria, charms and amulets are deemed wonderfully excellent; and as to Egypt, let any one who may be curious on the subject turn to Mr. Lane's description of the modern Egyptians, and there he will find instances enough of the prevalence of the feeling in that country; one of the most peculiar of which mentioned is, perhaps, that butchers conceal their meat from the public gaze, lest it should be tainted by the evil eye.

The women of Eleusis had an aspect of great poverty: a kind of long, loose woollen jacket, braided with black, and extremely unbecoming, seemed the favourite costume. After remaining an hour or two enjoying one of the most lovely views that can be pourtrayed, even in the imagination of those, whose lot it may have been, to behold the sea like a bright shining mirror, framed in mountains, and reflecting the deep azure of a southern sky; we again mounted for Athens. As we rode on we could but admire the beautiful beds of anemone carpeting the sward on the roadside; pink was the predominating colour, but the purple and white with the pink eye were also there, flourishing far more

luxuriantly than ever I beheld them in the gardens of England. Again we entered the defile of Daphne, with its towering rocks. High in air a noble eagle soared, whilst ravens, perched amongst the crags of Ægaleos, croaked hoarsely; neither were the ominous sounds confined to our right hand, as we might have wished: a falcon, however, flying from that part of heaven "from whence first is diffused all light, heat, motion, and life—the east!" dispersed any unpleasant feelings that might have invaded our minds by reason of our solemn neighbours. Buzzards were also sailing in circles, with unmoved wing, above our heads, floating in air, as if suspended by magic influence, forming a great contrast in their flight to the habit of the falcon which had just passed us, and which I believe to have been of the same species as those we noticed in the neighbourhood of Pentelicus, viz., the "marsh falcon;" for, whilst searching for its prey, this bird flies rapidly a short distance off the surface of the ground, trying to and fro with unwearied wing and perseverance, like a well-trained sporting dog, ranging up and down with unflagging zeal, not satisfied until he has proved truly every portion of his hunting ground. Perhaps it may be presumed, from this mode of seeking its prey, that this bird does not possess that extraordinary power of vision which many other hawks are known to possess; and therefore

depends more on the power of scenting its prey.

Halting at a little shed in this defile, we refreshed ourselves with aniseed and water. Captain Macdonald also purchased here some soft white glutinous composition, sweet-tasted and sickly, by some of the party pronounced good. Eastern bazaars are well stocked with this sweetmeat, but the name of it I do not remember. Again tarrying a moment to enjoy the splendid prospect from Mount Ægaleos, and again disturbing the air of repose which hangs over the groves of the Academy and the banks of the Cephissus, we galloped on to Athens, for we had engaged to dine that evening at the house of our Ambassador, Sir Edmund Lyons, and there we afterwards met several of the officers of the Russian corvette in harbour; and also had the pleasure of seeing some beautifully executed Sepia drawings of views in the Negropont, the work of a gentleman present—I believe, the Prussian Ambassador.

The following day we attended Divine service at the residence of our Ambassador. In the afternoon a military band played in the great square, and a considerable crowd of people, gaily costumed, betokened this the fashionable promenade. The performance was nothing very creditable, though certainly superior to some which I heard, when strolling through the city towards evening by myself, a great clangor of musical instruments, or instruments deemed musical by the Greeks, struck upon my ear. Dul-

cimers and lutes, anything but soft-toned, mingled with the noise of shout and song. A procession drew near; two Greeks were dragging between them, by the arms, another of the same nation, in the gaudy Albanian dress, and ornamented with wreaths of flowers; as he lolled about from side to side I deemed him mad with wine, but it proved that it was with love, for he was a bridegroom, and the marriage procession followed; male friends, in their richest dresses, trod in his wake, who, throwing their arms on high, "many Hymens sung." Then came numerous females, arrayed in fine apparel and showy ornaments, drawing on the fair virgin on the eve of departing from the train of Diana for the sake of our friend in front; female relatives sustained her trembling feet on either side, indeed almost bore her in their arms, as she reluctantly hung back; others threw themselves in attitudes of joy, and sang and danced, waving flowers before the betrothed. It was a curious and novel scene, and I followed them into the city, but, having an engagement, was compelled to return without seeing their destination.

It is said to be in Greece, as in Egypt and other eastern countries, customary for the damsel to be secluded from the eye of man, until, being arrived at maturity, she is given away, probably as interest may direct, to one who alone knows her personal attractions from what he may have gleaned through her duenna.

Female precocity is remarkable in these sunny climes, and marriage takes place at a very early age; in Egypt commonly at twelve a girl becomes a wife, and fifteen is about the usual period in Greece. The chief part of the day preceding the wedding is spent in mirth and frolic at the bath, whither the bride is led by a festive procession. As of old, so now, it is considered dishonourable for a man to remain in a state of celibacy, though I am not aware that the penalty of running nude, once every winter, round the forum, or being dragged by the hair, whilst beaten by women, is inflicted at this day, as it was amongst the ancient Greeks. Yet a modern Greek bachelor exposes himself to the remark addressed to Dercyllidas, as related by Plutarch, who upon entering a public assembly, was jostled by a youth, who, instead of rising up with that profound respect for superior years so deeply inculcated by the laws of the age, cried, "Sir, you must not expect that honour from me, being young, which cannot be returned to me by a child of yours when I am old." Thus the motto "Indigne vivit per quem non vivet et alter," is still heeded by the modern Greek.

Though the ruthless Turk no longer holds the citadel of Greece, neither does the signal gun of the Moslem Ramadan any longer reverberate from lofty Lycabettus; and although the rocky caverns of the neighbouring islands, and of the Peloponnesian

mountains are no longer crowded with famished refugees, hiding from the Turkish scimitar; and, indeed, since the fierce conflicts of the revolutionary war which so despoiled her, Athens has arisen from her ashes with a new and improved aspect; straight streets and European houses now adorning her, whilst again the busy throng crowd her well-stocked bazaars, and once more the sound of music is in her squares; yet an air of melancholy appears to pervade the city; and an air of discontent and depression her citizens; calling to the mind the degraded political position of modern Greece, and to the lips the quotation introduced by Chateaubriand, when contemplating the fallen state of this cradle of heroes and philosophers,

"Fuit quondam Græcia, fuerunt Athenæ,
Nunc neque in Græcia Athenæ, neque in ipsa Græcia,
Græcia est."

As my Athenian attendant pointed out to me the costliness of the new palace, and spoke of the vast sums doomed to be invested in ornaments for the interior; he groaned in spirit, saying the private citizens of Athens were the treasurers, and their coffers were in a melancholy state; drained to the dregs by heavy imposts. Their monarch rides about the town with hardly any retinue, and in his richly embroidered Albanian vest, mounted on a splendid charger, is a striking figure. For nigh ten years has Athens been the seat of government; for King

Otho, after remaining about a year at Napoli, entered the Athenian capital on the first of December, 1834. The modern city is said to contain nearly twenty thousand inhabitants, and the kingdom of Greece between seven and eight hundred thousand.

CHAPTER VII.

ATHENS TO ALEXANDRIA.

Leave Athens.—Albanian servant.—Insolent Frenchman.—Leave Piræus for Syra.—Syra.—Gale.—Run into Nio for refuge.—Excursion in the Island.—Wine of Nio.—View of Crete.—Annexed to Egyptian Government.—View of Egypt.—Alexandria.

THE hour was now drawing near that we proposed leaving Athens. Not but that we would have gladly prolonged our stay, although we had visited most of her numerous antiquities and other objects of note in the city and its suburbs; even from the richly-sculptured residence of the virgin goddess upon her elevated seat, to the sliding stone of the barren wives of Attica upon the plain below. But the season for arriving in Egypt was to be considered, and the proper period for traversing the deserts of Arabia. Therefore did we hasten our departure.

An Albanian, known by the name of "Elias," was most strongly recommended to our notice as a travelling servant. A fine active looking fellow, indeed; handsome features, set off by fierce roving

eyes, long curling moustache; and dark hair hanging down his back, in long dishevelled locks; for to this day does the Greek, especially the Albanian, pride himself on the length and straightness of his hair. The stature of Elias was some five feet nine inches; a scarlet tight-fitting vest, covered with embroidery, peeped from beneath a loose velvet jacket, richly ornamented with gold and silver work, whilst a white fustinette fell in heavy folds to the knee, but tightly girt in at the waist by a pistol belt, also richly adorned with silver, and containing a brace of long-barrelled pistols, and a bone handled stiletto: add to this a velvet cartouche box, worked with silver, carrying his cartridges, and suspended at his side, together with a crooked scimitar; braided blue buskins, with numerous tassals of the same colour, reaching to the ancle, and Turkish slippers of red morocco encasing his feet; you have our Albanian in all his glory.

You are a pretty dare-devil looking villain, said I mentally, as throwing himself into attitudes, he called all his gods to witness, that he could speak almost every language on the face of the earth; that the confusion of tongues did not annoy him in the least; that he was as brave as a lion; would sacrifice his heart's blood for his master, and was a concentration of honesty and virtue. As in that strain he modestly gave us his character, his fierce aspect denoted that he was ready to try his scimitar

on any gainsayer to his trumpet. It was *my* private opinion that Elias was a cut-throat scoundrel, very fit for an Albanian bandit or Turkish tool to roast and eat patriotic Greeks; but that for our purpose he would probably prove too bullying and roguish. However we engaged him, though rascal was stamped in elephant type in his eye. I had once before had a Greek servant, who served me faithfully in France and Italy; he was a Suliote, one *Giovanni Cacciotti*, an excellent and patriotic fellow enough; still must I confess that I am ungenerous enough to regard the generality of Greeks, who offer themselves in that capacity, with a certain degree of distrust and suspicion. Giovanni was now at Athens, but unfortunately could not speak Arabic, and moreover is getting too fat for any great stretch of activity, so that he would have been useless. When he saw our body guard, he looked doubtful but said little.

On the 31st of January, we bid adieu to Athens. Antonio, a Greek at the hotel, who had been about with me a good deal during our stay there, rushed into the room just before our departure, seized my hand, kissed it, pressed it to his forehead, then apparently struck with a sudden thought, ran out, but in a few minutes returned again, bearing a shallow earthen jar containing honey of Hymettus, which he forced us to accept, though we knew not what on earth to do with it, as a jar of honey covered with brown paper is an awkward

travelling companion; we deemed it best, therefore, to eat as much of it as we could upon the spot, to shew that we did not despise the gift, and whilst Antonio was otherwise engaged, I concealed it behind the door of the hall, just before stepping into the carriage, and there left it for the benefit of the finder. Arrived at the Piræus, we found the packet-office closed; the administrator of tickets, a pompous little ill-bred Frenchman, shewed us that national politeness and courtesy had found no hold in his breast; even a most official-looking packet, containing despatches from our Ambassador to the Consul at Syra, had no effect, and we were fain to take a boat and pull off to the steamer without our tickets. A tall, gaunt, whiskered and moustached Frenchman was the captain of the craft, who, endued with more courtesy than the agent on shore, told us that, though it was contrary to all rule, he would yet be considerate enough to take our passage-money without the usual ticket; and as he had no other passengers, I should suppose he was but too happy to do so. Having pulled across to the Howe, to bid adieu to our courteous entertainers on board that noble ship, we returned to the dirty tar-bespattered steamer, and found ourselves, about six p.m., running out of the harbour of the Piræus, wind moderate from the north-east, but the weather promising to be exceedingly foul.

By six o'clock on the following morning we were

at anchor in the harbour at Syra; a most miserable morning it was, the wind blew hard from the north-east, and a cold rain fell in torrents, as there we lay rolling, a kind of long heaving motion that landsmen abhor. The old portion of the town of Syra is strikingly situated upon a conical hill of considerable height, supposed to have been the Acropolis of the ancient Syros. The more modern part of the town lies at the base of this hill, facing the harbour, whilst lofty heights, naked and bare, form a rampart behind. Barren, indeed, was Syra, as far as we could judge, but yet it is famous for figs, as also for wheat, so that in the interior are doubtless rich valleys. Syra escaped devastation from the Turks during the revolutionary struggle; for her inhabitants joined not in the glorious conflict for liberty, therefore the print of the blood-stained Moslem foot was not impressed upon her soil.

Going on shore, we paid a visit to Consul Wilkinson, then withdrew to eat "honey of Syra" at the inn; neither did the inn or the honey prove bad; great quantities of the latter, as an Italian waiter informed us, is annually shipped to England. We afterwards adjourned to what we supposed to be the *Casino Nobile;* a wondrous mean one it is; a few broken seats, a considerable number of Syros loungers, dirty as the room, shrouded in tobacco smoke; and pipes innumerable, from the chibouk to the nargileh, were its chief ornaments. In a recess at the end

of the room was a vender of sweetmeats and the fragrant weed, who also did duty as pipe-cleaner. Unpleasant abode as this was, we deemed it preferable to the streets or the ship; the former, indeed, were undergoing what they evidently very much wanted—a good washing—for a perfect cataract of water was rushing through them. These streets are narrow and irregular, and their houses poor and ill-built.

About five p.m. we again pulled off for the steamer; fiercer and fiercer blew the wind; even the waters of the well sheltered harbour rose in angry billows; several outward-bound steamers were there, not daring to face the gale; one attempted it, but was obliged to put back, as, being for Constantinople, it was a head-wind for her. About six p.m. we, however, slipped out, but truly found a very ugly sea awaiting us. As the old craft pitched and laboured, creaked, and strained, the "remorseless billows" breaking right over her, and forming a noble cascade down the cabin stairs, we had enough to do to keep ourselves in our berths. Ever and anon struck by a heavy cross sea, she would hesitate for a moment in her course, quivering from stem to stern; then, as if gaining courage, gallantly she "tilted o'er the waves," the fierce wind whistling through the rigging a wild harmony; now drowned in the hoarse ragings of the surf, now swelling loud and clear above the

roaring of the sea. We were indeed exceedingly tossed with the tempest, and this was the same "tempestuous wind called Euroclydon," which caught the ship bearing St. Paul to Italy, off the southern coast of Crete. As they did, so did we under the like circumstances, and letting the ship drive, ran under a certain island, where, casting anchor in a little harbour, we "wished for the day." But although this place of refuge was remarkably sheltered, being compassed by high hills on all sides, yet did the wind rushing over the heights so gather there, as to cause us to drift nearly on shore, thus obliging us to run out to sea, that we might again enter and take up a safer berth; all of which manœuvring, was pretty well performed on the part of our captain, though probably an Englishman would not have cared sufficiently for such a gale to seek shelter at all. The Frenchman, nevertheless, magnified it into a fearful storm, and expressed himself at one time to have "lost all command of the vessel." Nio, or *Ios*, of the ancients, is one of the Sporades, and has claimed to be the burial place of Homer; but who knows where or when the sublime poet was born, or where or when he died? The cove in which we had thus sought shelter, presents the form of a pear; the narrow entrance being as it were the strig or stalk. A small domed building, whitewashed, stands upon the rocky cliff near the entrance. Upon the eastern shore within rises a sugar-loaf shaped hill, graced,

on its slopes, with a small, poverty-struck village, the houses of which stand in tiers one above another, and being flat topped, the roofs of those below serve for highways to the next range above. Upon the ridge of a hill overhanging the town, four-and-twenty windmills, rough conical buildings of stone, with ten or twelve sweeps each, stand in array. Terraces formed upon the hill sides, speak of grapes and other crops in their season. The vine rejoices in these stony declivities of the Greek isles.

The morning having dawned, we took our guns and landed to explore. The natives would not come near us, for fear of our communicating the plague. However, we at last prevailed upon an old grey-headed man, to accompany us in the character of guide and guardiano. The general aspect of the island, at this season, was not pleasing: a mere succession of hills, with loose rocky declivities and narrow valleys between, cultivated for vines, corn, and lentils. In summer, doubtless, some of these valleys are very pretty, myrtle and oleander growing freely. The anemones were at this time very gay in some parts. As for game, we saw nothing, except two quails, and flocks of the blue rock pigeon, which dwell amongst the caverns in the hills. On our way back, obtaining an amphora of wine from a peasant, our guardiano forgot the pestilence, and quaffing deeply from the same vessel with us, threw it to its owner again.

This wine was remarkably luscious, resembling sugar and water stirred up to a good consistency with mud; the latter perhaps used, as meal is by the Persians; to soften the wine. "Ad lætitiam datum est vinum," has been said and sung, but this to me was productive of much sorrow rather than joy; making me so ill that I poured forth an involuntary libation to Bacchus on the sands. Casting some small coin into a puddle of water to be taken out by the natives when considered duly purified, we again went on board, but the captain refused to brave the storm that night, so there we lay for six-and-twenty hours.

On the 4th we were far away on the Cretan Sea, with the kingdom of Minos looming in the distance to the south-west, but a thick haze shrouding it, we looked in vain for Ida. Crete extends from east to west nearly 300 miles. In 1827, soon after the battle of Navarino, it was united to the government of Mehemet Ali. During the revolution the Cretans had not been idle, having nearly succeeded in ejecting the forces of the Sultan. The wild Sfakiotes, descended from their mountain fastnesses to fight the battle of liberty, to some purpose; but the decree of the allied powers, annexing their island to the dominions of the Egyptian, little suited their views; their project of independence was swamped; but the wily Pasha sealed the grant with Cretan blood, and the wild and rebellious Sfakiotes were again slaves. Yes, slaves to a more energetic and

therefore harder task-master, than even the Sultan had proved. Mehemet Ali introduced himself to them by hanging up thirty-one of the rebels without benefit of clergy; doubtless as much to the delight of the Cretan vultures, as to the horror of the paralysed inhabitants.

Upon the 5th the sea had lulled much, and it was quite warm and delightful on deck. Between ten and eleven p.m. we hailed with joy the low flat coast of Egypt. An Egyptian line-of-battle ship on her way to the Syrian coast was visible a few miles to the east of our course. Merchant vessels of different nations and strange rig were scudding before the wind, or beating up against it. A Greek craft passed within hail, with her broad spreading sails and picturesque crew. The soft breeze was playing on the water, and numerous sea-fowl followed in our wake as onward we glided, eager to gain the port before us, and enjoy the luxury of that change of climate which we already felt had commenced. Objects on shore became rapidly more and more conspicuous, doubtful lines gradually grew into lofty columns and graceful minarets; the eye now ranged from Pompey's Pillar, on its commanding eminence, to the lighthouse, at this day usurping the site of that costly tower of fine marble, which, erected under the first Ptolemies, where

> "The sea-girt Pharian isle
> Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile,"

reflected its warning fire to the mariner a hundred

miles from the dangerous coast: then farther west, a long, long range of between eighty and one hundred windmills, upon the flat sea-shore, attract the gaze, betokening the productive soil. Leaving a reef of rocks to the east, we entered the harbour of Alexandria, sheltered by the tongue of land, which carried out some twenty-eight years before the Christian era to the little island of Pharos, now connects it to the continent, rendering it a much more secure refuge for ships than it could have been before; but the entrance is very bad, so that heavily-laden large ships cannot pass in. Black Egyptian three-deckers crowded the port, with many smaller vessels of strange build; for the energetic Pasha has ships, sailors, dockyards, and arsenals at Alexandria, by no means despicable.

We landed as soon as possible. Curious costumes, foreign physiognomies, tongues harsh as unknown to our ear, reminded us, how distant lay the shore we now pressed, from our own native land. But what is there in the aspect of the modern Iskendereeyeh, to remind us of the ancient magnificence of that city, which, 332 years before the Christian era, sprung up beneath the hand of the mighty Macedonian, to become the capital of his unlimited dominions—a city second only to Rome—a mart into which flowed the riches of the farthest east, ivory, spices, and precious stones, from the very banks of the Ganges itself; whilst thousands of

heavy-freighted ships were gliding from her capacious harbours, bearing the tide of riches onward to the most remote shores of the "Great Sea," like the waters of the Nile, which, laden with fertility, burst from their channel, flooding with their fatness the wide plains of Egypt. Idleness, was a crime as unknown within the gates of Alexandria, as within those of Athens when the venerable council of the Areopagus sat in uncorrupted authority.

Neither did the Ptolemies neglect to extend that commerce, the nursery of which was thus founded by their illustrious predecessors. Thousands after thousands poured forth from Greece, Syria, and Phenice towards the Egyptian capital, seduced by the immunities held forth by the son of Lagus to those engaged in commerce. The energetic Ptolemy Philadelphus followed the example of his parent; and the "daughter of Sidon," with her merchant princes, vainly struggled to compete with Alexandria.

From the crowded ports of Berenice and Myos Hormos, the treasures of India and southern Africa, transported several days' journey across the desert by caravans to Coptos, poured down the Nile, by Memphis, to the new capital. And what was the revenue of this great city? for a fleet rode upon the Mediterranean and Red Seas; an army of 200,000 foot and 40,000 horse, 300 elephants trained to battle, and 2,000 armed chariots always stood prepared for war. According to the best

computation, a treasure of above one hundred and ninety millions sterling was in her coffers, the accumulations of Ptolemy Soter, and Philadelphus.

The enterprising Euergetes, penetrating the unknown regions of Abyssinia, sought the very fountains of the Nile, and, subduing the fierce and predatory natives, tarried to sacrifice at Aduli, in Ethiopia, an offering of thanksgiving to the god of war, and then sat down in peace at Alexandria to study philosophy amidst her vast libraries, and to dive with the Athenian Eratosthenes into the mysteries of astronomy; for beneath the fostering care of the Ptolemies all the wisdom of the day flourished within this noble city, and she became even more renowned for her schools of philosophy than for commerce and opulence; students flocked in from far countries, and returning bore the wisdom and philosophy of the Alexandrian schools to their native shores, thus again distributing her riches. For centuries she thus grew on in might, learning, and consequent renown, until wealth begat luxury, and luxury begat effeminacy and voluptuousness, so that she became even a by-word. Like Rome,

> —— "the vanquished earth her tribute paid,
> And deadly treasures to her view displayed:
> Then truth and simple manners left the place,
> While riot reared her lewd dishonest face;
> Virtue, to full prosperity gave way,
> And fled from rapine, and the lust of prey."
>
> ROWE'S LUCAN.

Thus surfeited with excess of wealth and glory, her power was undermined. Wisdom and renown fled her gates; and in the seventh century after Christ the Caliph Omar descended with his barbarian hordes upon Alexandria like vultures to a carcase. The standard of Mahomet floated on her walls, and the pride and care of the Ptolemies fell before the "Scourge of God," as the followers of the False Prophet styled the victorious Saracen. And where are now, in the 1260th year of the Hejira, those four thousand palaces and four thousand baths, noble structures of porphyry and fine marble, which Amrou found within her walls, when he proclaimed to Omar, "I have taken the great city of the west?"

CHAPTER VIII.

ALEXANDRIA.

Ride to the Frank quarter.—Modern Alexandrines.—Antiquities of Alexandria.—Nubian slave.—Pasha's palace.—Mehemet Ali.

VAST was the concourse of Egyptians, awaiting with evident anxiety the moment that we should first set foot on *terra firmâ;* but no sooner did we so than a man in authority stepped forward, who, by dint of showering most furious blows around with one of those tremendous whips of hammered Hippopotamus hide called "koorbag" (a most common and useful companion in that country), caused the gathered multitude of men and donkeys to fly on all sides, thus clearing a way for us to an open kind of storehouse, dignified with the appellation of *Customhouse;* where we sat and gazed upon the novel scene until a slight process had been gone through with our luggage, which groaning camels then kneeled to receive, whilst we mounting donkeys, accoutred with very primitive saddles, secured by ropes manufactured from the fibre of the date palm, sought the Frank quarter of the town, traversing streets crooked, confined, and dark; many of them being covered over head, by matting stretched

from house to house to keep off the sun. Onward we marched;

> "Mid many things unsightly to strange e'e,
> For hut and palace shew like filthily,
> The dingy denizens are reared in dirt,
> No personage of high or mean degree
> Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt."

Gaunt brown fellahs half unclad; women wrapped up in scanty unwashed garments, with their faces daubed as it were with curious devices in blue paint, and naked children, black with flies, ambling by their sides, choked the narrow ways. The atmosphere was redolent with fumes of the crowded populace, and long trains of heavily burthened camels swinging by, threatened immediate dissolution both to ourselves and donkeys, by crushing us against the walls. Of little avail was the hoarse cry of the camel-driver, *O'a! O'a!* when there was neither room on one side or the other to profit by it. Right glad were we at last to emerge into the Frank quarter, where a wide street afforded a purer atmosphere, and houses of superior build pleased the eye.

An officer of the Indian army (now on his return to that country after leave of absence), had come on board at Syra, and in his society we turned out of the hotel very soon after our arrival, to see as much as we could of Alexandria, between that afternoon and the following morning, when we were to proceed at an early hour for Cairo. The

first object of examination was the "Column of the Pillars," or "Pompey's Pillar," as it is vulgarly called, though more justly attributed to the Romans, both from the import of the inscription upon its pedestal, as also from the fact observed by Clarke; that the Egyptians, in the age of the Ptolemies, would have considered as sacrilegious the application of stones covered with sacred characters, to form a foundation for an edifice or monument, as is the case with regard to this pillar. It was ascertained by the above traveller that the whole of this massive column, which, including the capital, shaft, and pedestal, forms a height of ninety feet or more; (the shaft itself being sixty-three feet in height, and eight feet in diameter at the base,) is sustained upon a prop of stone, only four feet square; an affirmation before made by some early traveller, but pronounced false both by Norden and Pococke. May it not be deemed that something of the kind is obscurely hinted at in the "Old Physician of Bagdad," Abd Allalif, *his* relation, where he says, "Some ancient Arabian writers did assert this column to stand upon a pivot in the earth, and that when the wind blew, stones placed beneath the column were by the force of its motion ground to powder." A fable deduced probably from an Arabian legend, very ancient even in Abd Allalif's time, who travelled in the latter part of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century; namely, that a temple, one of the wonders of the world, raised by

genii to Solomon, once stood there; and that one of the columns of this temple visibly moved, inclining towards the east at sunrise, and towards the west at sunset. From such legends, and from the Arabic signification of the name, as also from other relations of ancient Arabian authors, it has been presumed that the "Column of Pillars" received its name, on account of the numerous other pillars which once surrounded it, supporting some magnificent building. Of these surrounding columns, Abd Allalif, whose testimony is to be relied on, relates, that when he was there he found considerable remains, some entire and showing that they once supported a roof; moreover, says he, "Above the 'Column of Pillars,' there is a cupola, which it supports," and this he conjectures, to be "the portico, beneath which, Aristotle delivered lectures to his disciples."

Standing at this time, as it does, alone, this pillar is glorious in its sublimity, and served to give us some slight introduction to that scale of architecture to be met with in this country, and which drew the exclamation from Champollion, "The conceptions of the ancient Egyptians were those of men a hundred feet high!" Tales of persons who have no less artfully than daringly attained the summit of this monument have often been related, and how such exploits were forbidden to be repeated, on account of an union jack being once left flying there.

Cleopatra's needle, based midst garbage and sleeping dogs, towered now some seventy feet in air above our heads, for our good donkeys had delivered us from the mob of naked ragamuffins shrieking in our ears "Back-sheesh! Back-sheesh!" ("A present! A present!") as they brought us fragments of the red granite, of which Pompey's Pillar is composed.

A collection of square huts, constructed of mud mingled with chopped straw, (for at this day do the Egyptians "gather straw to make bricks,") lines the way to the elegant obelisk. The flat roofs of these huts are formed by logs of palm trunks laid across the top, then strewed with palm leaves, and mud to fill up the interstices. Upon these roofs, and around the holes in the walls, passing with them for doorways, were men, women, and children, whose chief apparel was dirt; some few of them, were engaged in sifting maize, and sorting sugar-cane, but this was only amongst the women, for the men were sprawling lazily in the sun and dust. Some of them had dirty cotton skull-caps on their heads, besides which a loose blue kind of shirt was their only covering; others, again, were as nearly naked as it was possible to be without being totally so. As to the ladies, many of them had the upper portion of the figure, excepting the face, almost wholly exposed, whilst the "*boorko*," or veil of black crape, hung over their mouths and noses, with coins or

other trifles, attached by way of amulets or ornament. Many of these Alexandrines, however, had their faces, to my surprise, uncovered, and were as impudent in manner as well could be; the foreheads and chins of all were tattooed more or less, as also their hands, whilst around their wrists were bracelets; not like those weighty ornaments worn by the women of Mesopotamia, in the time of the patriarch Abraham, as appears in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, where it is said, that his messenger to Rebekah presented her with "two bracelets for her hands, of ten shekels' weight of gold," a weight which at this day may, perhaps, be found on the arms or ancles of the modern Hindoos and some other Orientals; but those of the Egyptians are light and small, often not wholly circling the arm, and the most common are of twisted brass wire. I looked to hear the jingling of anklets, but these are, I believe, in Lower Egypt, chiefly confined to the Almehs, or dancing girls.* The hue of the skin of the inhabitants of Lower Egypt is yellowish brown; the blue ornaments pricked upon the female face, hands, and arms, give them a most barbarous appearance. The operation to produce this is performed by

* In the southern provinces of Egypt, anklets are worn, vying in weight with Rebekah's bracelets. Thus Ignatius Palme says of the women of Kordofan, (a region to the south of Dongola,) that sometimes they wear copper anklets, "even as much as one pound in weight."

several needles tied together, fixed in a cork, with which the skin is pricked, and lamp-black then rubbed in mingled with milk. In Egypt, a paste of some particular species of vegetable leaf is then applied, to give the peculiar tint, it is said. The operation is painful, if performed to any extent; indeed, a Copt servant we had with us at Jerusalem, was rendered quite ill by it. The arm is often ornamented from the shoulder to the hand, or even to the tips of the fingers, with most intricate devices. I once had a few strokes of the needle tried upon myself by a professor in the art, and found the smart produced by the marking composition, too sharp and lasting to be agreeable.

Leaving the obelisks, we adjourned to the Pasha's palace at the western extremity of the city; where at first we were refused admittance by the sentries at the gate, but a few piastres cleared the way. A Nubian moving rapidly towards the Royal residence, with a waiter poised beautifully upon his head, reeking with certain hot delicacies, passing us in the garden, uncourteously pushed against us, evidently to insult the Djaours, which brought down upon him such a tremendous kick from our gallant companion, that the astonished Nubian, giving an involuntary bound, very much disconcerted his precious burthen, then rushing back in a fury, seemed much inclined to inflict summary vengeance on us, but thinking better of it, made a great outcry to the sentries,

who at first looked aghast that a blow should have been struck within the precincts of the palace, but soon gave way to laughter, at the expense of the black, who, with a ludicrous air of offended dignity, walked off. The Pasha's residence presents nothing very peculiar, being furnished in a very European style—halls and passages oilclothed, and a French tent bed gracing his sleeping apartment. In a handsome circular anteroom were some magnificent vases, presented to him, I think we were informed, by the King of the French. The interior of each room was encircled with the usual Oriental divans. It is in fact a very comfortable palace, and nothing more. Mehemet Ali was unfortunately at this time absent, so that we had no opportunity of a presentation, which was very mortifying, as we had set our hearts upon beholding that extraordinary man, who, stepping from the humble rank of a Roumelian tobacco merchant, grasped his sword in the capacity of a private soldier in the Turkish pay, then cut his way, in spite of powerful opposition, to the governorship of Egypt, and ultimately, to the astonishment of all nations, after threatening the powers of the earth with a universal war, has determinately obtained the hereditary pashalic of a vast territory, happy in position, rich in resources.

The power and progress of a daring and talented spirit, is indeed wonderfully developed, in the rise of Mehemet Ali. And the late Turco-Egyptian question, from its origin to its settlement, is

surely one of the most extraordinary and curious that ever excited the attention and deep interest of the civilized world. Few could have used with such effect the power that Mehemet Ali has won by his superior talents and daring career. Few, could in this age, have brought such strength to a Mahomedan kingdom as the present Pasha has to Egypt; for take her props of foreign powers away, she would, under her present ruler, show far greater stability than that tottering empire, to which she is nominally subject, would show under the like circumstances. Had not the Christian powers interfered indeed, the throne of Mehemet Ali might now be flanked by the Dardanelles and Bosphorus: for a far more energetic spirit, than that of the late Sultan Mahmoud, or his successor, the effeminate Abdul Medjid, now upon the throne of Osman, would have been required; and a far more skilful general than Rechid Pasha; to stop the onward course of Ibrahim, when, in 1832, after having seized the whole of Syria, he drove the retreating Turkish forces from the defiles of Taurus, and felt that the Ottoman empire was within his grasp if she stood longer unaided. Acre, Damascus, Baalbec, and Aleppo, strongholds of Syria, had all yielded to his arms with little opposition; and the Sublime Porte itself might have fallen an easy prey.

CHAPTER IX.

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO.

Leave Alexandria.—Mahmoudieh canal.—Rising and subsiding of the Nile.—Wild fowl.—Egyptian villages.—Heavy dew.—Arrival at Atfè.—Nile.—Drunken engineers.—Visit an Egyptian village.—Assailed by inhabitants.—Dung cakes for fuel.—Birds.—Boulac.—Cairo.—Hotel.—Mamelukes.

On February the 6th we left Alexandria for Cairo. I strongly urged hiring a private boat, to pass to Atfè, where the Nile is entered by the canal Mahmoudieh; in order that by so doing we might be at leisure to tarry where and when we chose; but the motion was blackballed, and we went by a large boat, towed by a smaller one with an Archimedes screw, a speculation then lately entered into for the more convenient traffic of passengers and goods towards Cairo. The length of this canal is about forty-eight miles; and the track-boats, drawn by horses, which were in use before the introduction of this little tow-boat, performed the distance in from seven to nine hours generally, whilst the average time taken by a hired boat for the whole journey from Alexandria to Cairo is about three days; but by adverse winds it is often made a

voyage of five or more. These boats swarming with vermin, and the boatmen often giving much trouble, the present mode of transit may be deemed a very great accommodation, particularly for Indian passengers. We proceeded at about the rate of six miles an hour. Volney has observed, that Egypt assumes in succession, the appearance of "an ocean of fresh water, a miry morass, a green level plain, and a parched desert of sand and dust." The last feature it bears from May till August, and the former successively during the remaining months; for the Nile commencing its rise in June, reaches about half its height in August, and at the end of September or beginning of October is at its full flood, at which it stands for a few days, without apparent increase or decrease, then gradually sinks until the middle of May, when it is at its lowest ebb. The country on either side the first portion of the canal presented a morass covered with coarse verdure, with here and there pools and lakes; the salt marshes of Mareotis on the right, and those of Aboukir on the left. Wild fowl were numerous on all sides; geese and ducks, of various species, mingled with coots and shags, blackening the waters, whilst around the shallow edges were feeding waders of many species, amongst which I recognised, the avoset, and black-winged long-shanks. Half-concealed by the reeds, long grass, and rushes, appeared thousands of pelicans, cranes, white herons, and common English herons.

No longer did I wonder from whence came that "infinite number of large birds of various kinds," which, as Plutarch relates, "rose like a black cloud," and lighting upon the place which Alexander had marked out for the new city, eat up all the flour, which he had used for want of chalk, in drawing the lines of the design!

The settlements of the Fellahs, or agricultural Egyptians, on either bank of the canal are frequent, and extremely curious. Overshadowed by lofty date-palms, are huts of mud baked in the sun, rough logs of the trunk of the palm across the top, covered with rubbish, forming the flat roofs, upon which dogs and naked children generally are to be seen, while here and there a strange sugar-loaf shaped building of mud appears, frequently daubed with wild ornament of white or red paint, and the summit divided into little turrets, generally coloured white, with numerous sticks projecting from them. It requires little observation to find out what these latter erections may be, for on each stick you will very likely see a pigeon, whilst hundreds are flying around, and these are their domiciles. Earthen pots being built into the walls, with their apertures turned towards the interior of the building, and the bases showing on the exterior, the birds, entering the edifice by holes in the turrets, build their nests within the mouths of the pots. Thick groves of the date-palm are invariably found close to Egyptian villages, for their shade is as grateful to the inhabitants, as their fruit

is useful, and indeed a staple commodity. Moreover, amongst the elegant foliage of these beautiful trees, doves, hoopoes, crows, and hawks, find an undisturbed retreat: all revered by the natives: the dove, for its social qualities and gentleness; the hawk, for its radiant eye, the emblem of the sun. Every village swarms with dogs, serving as scavengers, guards, and spies to warn the approach of an enemy. In the outskirts of the villages, a building with a square base of mud, surmounted by a whitewashed dome, and often ornamented with mock frieze-work and daubs of colour, will very generally attract the stranger's attention. They are the tombs of deceased saints and devout sheikhs; and stated visits are often made to these edifices; for the Egyptians have remarkably strong superstitious feelings regarding such holy persons, and believe much benefit to be derived from these visits to their sepulchres.

We found the sun delightfully warm upon deck during the day, but after nightfall a heavy dew completely wet us, before, becoming aware of it, we turned in to sleep upon the narrow and hard benches of the cabin.

It was nine o'clock in the evening that, landing at Atfè, we found ourselves surrounded by camels, stretching their long necks over our heads, and rending the air with their hideous lamentations, whilst the harsh cries of their drivers, and the running here and there of numerous Egyptian

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boatmen gathered round, mingled with the darkness, caused a scene of indescribable confusion; but ultimately, we were safely shipped on board a little English steamer which plies upon the Nile, and thus at last found ourselves in reality upon the bosom of that renowned river, which at this point is between a quarter and half a mile in breadth, with a current running perhaps two miles per hour, though in some parts it is much more rapid, especially when the river is full.

The following morning I was on deck at a very early hour. The stars were still brightly sparkling over head, with that lustre which a southern sky alone presents; but a cold wind and heavy dew, laden with ill to those exposed to it, soon drove me down into the cabin again. We were gliding on through one vast extended plain of rich verdure, over which the Nile's "dark waves of mud" had lately "brooded." But is the fatness of the land reflected upon the faces of its inhabitants? No! Starvation and extreme poverty are stamped upon the countenance of the sunburnt Fellah: for when they labour they do so without remuneration, and are goaded to it by overseers, for no excitement have they to labour without; as, if they cultivate a portion of ground, Government pounces upon the crop, and carries it away in her talons, leaving but a nominal price, whilst oppressive imposts and cruel exactions totally debar them from the remotest hope of bettering their condition. Hopeless op-

pression necessarily produces delinquency, and thus are the Egyptian Fellahs, the most slavish and demoralized race, that can anywhere be met with. The Pasha is the only landed proprietor in Egypt now. Professor Robinson, adverting to this fact in the first volume of his "Biblical Researches," draws a comparison between the Pasha's proceedings (relating to his seizure of the property of his subjects, and other acts of this nature,) and those of Pharaoh mentioned in the forty-seventh chapter of Genesis: "At the entreaty of the people themselves, Joseph *bought* them and their land for Pharaoh, so that 'the land became Pharaoh's;' but he gave them bread in return, to sustain them and their families in the time of famine. 'Only the land of the priests he bought not;' but the modern Pharaoh made no exception, and stripped the mosques and other religious and charitable institutions of their landed endowments, as mercilessly as the rest. Joseph also gave the people seed to sow, and required for the King only a fifth of the produce, leaving four-fifths to them as their own property; but now, though seed is in like manner given out, yet every village is compelled to cultivate two-thirds of its lands with cotton and other articles solely for the Pasha, and also to render back to him, in the form of taxes and exactions in kind, a large proportion of the produce of the remaining third."

The banks of the Nile, (or "*El Bahr*," the river, as the natives call it,) between Atfê and

Cairo, are in many places overhung with tamarisk and mimosa. I was struck with the uninviting appearance of the water of the river; certainly to behold it one is led to marvel at the assertion of the Egyptian Moslem, "If Mahomed had tasted the waters of the Nile, he would have prayed for terrestrial immortality to enjoy them." Surely, thought I, the fountain of milk and honey which jets forth from beneath the tuba-tree of happiness, standing at the gate of the seventh heaven, as described in the Koran, must be preferable to this turbid stuff; indeed, I never could succeed in discovering the delectable attributes of the Nile water; filtered or unfiltered, I doubt its title to the glowing terms bestowed upon it, "Champagne of all waters," &c.: unless filtered, indeed, it is known to be very noxious, producing boils, dysentery, and prickly heat. We observed as we passed on, that the banks of the river were in many parts undermined by the current, and here and there considerable masses had altogether slipped away. These embankments must require constant attention, otherwise the channel, by means of such landslips, and consequent extent of surface given the water, would become shallowed; and the soil brought down from Upper Egypt, during the season of its rising, gradually forming bars and choking the stream, might in course of time materially alter the character of the inundations. Bevies of Fellahs were to be seen, therefore, at different points, restoring

the embankments, working generally in an utter state of nudity, and apparently having no better instruments for labour than a kind of hoe, and baskets, which latter women and children filling with their hands, bore away to the spot where the soil was to be deposited.

We were informed that the rise of the Nile the last season had been unusually high, and consequently calamitous; for when the water exceeds its usual elevation, many of the miserable mud villages of the Fellahs are washed away, and both inhabitants and property sacrificed. To guard against this the villages are indeed always built on elevated mounds, but still suffer at times. The deposition of soil, which, brought down by the annual inundations, has, age after age, gradually heightened the surface of Lower Egypt, and must still continue to do so, does not then seem to diminish the extent of the fertilizing floods, as it has been suggested by some that it might do. Indeed, the present choked-up state of the numerous ancient canals, and other channels of escape for the waters, may materially tend to diminish any such fear.

The engineers of our steamer; Englishmen, I regret to say; were excessively drunk, and lay-to for nearly three hours at a village about halfway between Atfè and Cairo, chiefly for the sake of amusing themselves with the stoker, a Nubian, whom calling up from below, they caused to act the clown before them, whilst they sat on the

paddle-box drinking spirits, and endeavouring to play at cards. One of the owners of the boat, I believe, or at all events one of the agents of the company, was on board, but shamefully, in spite of our remonstrances, refused to interfere, because, he said, the engineers would leave the vessel if he did, and we should not get to Cairo at all. It certainly was not probable that he should have had any influence over them, as he himself was desperately tipsy the whole of the day before, or, as he called it, had "a severe attack of the stomach," and to-day earnestly requested some medicine, much to our amusement. Presently the spirit moved the drunken rascals on the paddle-box, to attack the unfortunate stoker with a hippopotamus-hide whip, because, as one of them expressed himself, there was "Niente di fuoco," "Niente di vapore;" so that the terrified black seeking refuge below again, both *fuoco* and *vapore* were quickly produced, and we were off once more. I, however, took the opportunity during this delay to land, and entering the village, shot a hoopoe sitting on a palm-tree, wishing to procure its skin. The bird fell within the precincts of a mud court of one of the huts, which having the audacity to enter, I secured my game, making my exit again with the greatest expedition, assailed by dogs, women, and children, so that deeming "discretion the better part of valour," I took to my heels with my hoopoe; but, alas! soon became confounded midst a labyrinth of mud walls, and mobbed by numbers of women,

some clad in loose blue mantles, others almost unclad, all equally ugly, dirty, and clamorous, pointing at my hoopoe with shrieks and screams of "*Backsheesh! Backsheesh!*" Throwing some small coin amongst them in order to divert the attack, at last I made my escape, followed by a handful or two of gravel at my head, as a parting benediction, and snarling cowardly curs at my heels as an escort. No one who has not entered an Egyptian village, can imagine the peculiarly stifling smell to be found there, proceeding from the unwashed state of the inhabitants, the accumulation of dirt, and the collections of cakes for fuel, stuck on the walls to dry in the sun, composed of camels', buffaloes', asses', or mules' dung mixed with chopped straw; for the scarcity of wood compels them to use this redolent fuel, the sight of which brought to my memory that remarkable passage in the book of the Prophet Ezekiel, which called from the pen of the scoffing Infidel, Voltaire, a foundless flood of ridicule, under the head, "De quelques passages singuliers de ce prophète, et de quelques usages anciens." In all Oriental countries the natives are in many parts compelled to use this fuel, and in some are even driven to bake their bread with that more defiling composition, referred to in Ezekiel merely as a type of the miserable destitution threatened to overtake the children of Israel for their iniquities.

Numerous *djerms*, with their enormous sails,

passed us on the river, looking as if the slightest unexpected squall must capsize them; but such is, I believe, seldom the case, and when it is, lives are rarely lost, for the Egyptians are almost as much in their element in water, as on land.

Onward gliding, we watched with much interest a very beautiful bird, a species of kingfisher, which is very common on the Nile and about the canals of Egypt. Its size is near that of the song thrush, but its plumage spotted black and white, and its bill extremely long in proportion to its body, and perfectly straight and black. Darting from its resort upon the bank, this elegant bird would hover for a few moments some ten feet above the surface of the water, with a very quick motion of its wings, then dashing down would again appear from the spray, flying up around it, and skim away to the bank with its prey, a small fish. A gentleman on board hinted that this might be the bird referred to by Herodotus, under the name of the *trochilus*, as a favoured ally of the crocodiles, on account of its feeding on the leeches drawn into the rapacious maw of that animal, much to its discomfort. Spencer's reference to the same bird, in his "Visions of the World's Vanity," involuntarily rose to my memory—

> "Beside the fruitful shore of muddy Nile,
> Upon a sunny bank, outstretched lay
> In monstrous length, a mighty crocodile,
> That, crammed with guiltless blood and greedy prey

Of wretched people travelling that way,
Thought all things less than his disdainful pride:
I saw a little bird, called tedula,
The least of thousands which on earth abide,
That forced this hideous beast to open wide
The grisly gates of his devouring hell,
And let him feed, as nature doth provide,
Upon his jaws, that with black venom swell.
Why then should greatest things the least disdain,
Sithe that so small, so mighty can constrain?"

But there were no crocodiles in this part of the Nile for our kingfisher to perform the office of toothpick to, so we could not vouch for its being, in truth, the "Trochilus" or "Tedula." Huge cranes, resting most of them upon one leg, stiff and bolt upright, stood in files upon the mud banks in the river; but ever and anon, one stalking forward, performed some curious evolutions, apparently for the amusement of his companions, and then hopped back into the ranks again. We also observed many of the large brown vultures on the mud banks.

The striking forms of the great pyramids now were visible in the distance, rousing in each breast its train of meditation.

It was late when we arrived at Boulac, the port for vessels coming up the river with freights for Cairo. A doubt was raised whether the gates of the city would be open at that hour; but, mounting donkeys, we soon found ourselves within the precincts of the capital of Egypt, *Mizr*, or *Masr*,

of the modern Egyptian; "the Delight of the imagination" of Arabian writers.*

Traversing dark narrow streets, and taking a turning to the left, so confined that two persons can hardly pass on donkeyback, we found ourselves within the court-yard of the "Great Eastern Hotel:" a curious rambling building it is. The ornaments about it speak of past magnificence, for it was once the palace of a Mameluke Bey. Its owner probably fell upon that bloody 1st of March, in the year 1811, which saw the massacre of that splendid body of which he was a member, and whose forefathers, brought as slaves and captives from Circassia, rose from that slavery and captivity as Borgite princes, vying in authority and achievements that race of no less degraded origin, Tartar slaves, brought from the shores of the Caspian in the early part of the thirteenth century, who, forming the first, or Baharite dynasty of Mamelukes, had preceded them; and thus for nigh six hundred years did *slaves* of *slaves* wield the sceptre of Egypt; for, to crown the peculiarity of the constitution, instead of the authority of the four-and-twenty beys descending in succession to their heirs,

* According to Mr. Lane's researches, *El-Káhireh* (as this city was originally named) seems to have been founded A.D. 968, and to have derived its name from *El-Káhir*, (the planet Mars,) ascendant at the period of its foundation. The renowned Saladin first encircled it with walls. The present city covers a space of three square miles, containing a population of about 240,000.

it was invested in their *slaves.* "The basest of kingdoms" indeed!

Though the Mamelukes were much depressed in power when Mehemet Ali mounted the throne of Egypt in 1804, yet their wild turbulence and intriguing spirit of ambition, was quite sufficient to attract the jealous eye of the wary Pasha, and distracted as he was by foreign war, the strength of his army engaged far away in Arabia, in fighting against the Wahabees, policy urged him to exterminate a domestic evil which so continually threatened his overthrow: but justice and humanity cried aloud against so treacherous and cowardly a butchery as that by which he effected it; impressing a dark stain of ferocious barbarity upon his character, too indelible to be relieved by any acts of murderous injustice of other nations, ancient or modern, by a comparison with which he endeavours to palliate it. The origin of the perpetrator, born of a barbarous race, to whom the shedding of human blood is as the shedding of water, is the only apology for the foul crime.

CHAPTER X.

CAIRO.

Visit Citadel, &c.—Young Englishmen at the Hotel.—Forest of Petrified Trees.—Mosque of Sultan Hassan.—Tradition.—Island of Rhoda.—Rising of the Waters.

THE day after our arrival at Cairo we called upon our consul, Mr. Walne, and then mounting donkeys rode to the citadel, and visited the well called Joseph's Well, remarkable for its style of excavation. It is a curious work of art. Descending it, we followed a winding flight of steps, so cut as to leave between them and the shaft, a thin partition of rock; these steps are so slippery and broken, that there is great danger of going down with disagreeable velocity. At 150 feet from the surface is cut an archway in the rocky partition, passing beneath which is a square plateau, where again you find the mouth of another shaft said to be of 120 feet in depth, and I believe not descendible; the bottom of this is level with the bed of the Nile: thus water is never wanting, as they say, it soaks through from the river; but the water of the well is brackish, and that of the Nile sweet; however, this may be accounted for, perhaps,

by the nitrous composition of the soil of Egypt. A rather pretty Egyptian girl showed us down; neither was she loth to exhibit her face; her beautifully formed arm, was encircled by the common twisted brass bracelet, and she tripped up and down the dilapidated steps with wonderful lightness. Leaving this well, we rode to the Castle Hill, and on the way traversed a narrow pass, with on one side a lofty face of rock. Here was the dastardly slaughter of the Mamelukes commenced. The Castle Hill is the north-western extremity of the sterile Mokattam range. The rock reflected an intense heat, and our servant having forgotten the order necessary before mounting to the fort, we, during the delay, couched for shade beneath the masses Titanean strewed around, after sufficiently amusing ourselves with the bullying and blustering of one of the sentinels, who came forth in a menacing way with a long spear to prevent our proceeding.

The view from the height, when attained, well repays the ascent. The rich Delta, in breadth above a hundred and twenty miles, is spread out before you, intersected by that renowned river which feeding its plains, produces their incomparable verdure. The line of mysterious pyramids stand like gigantic sentinels upon its western bank, backed by the boundless Lybian Desert; and again turn, and behold the eastern boundary, like the

western, a scorched and barren wilderness, unaltered in aspect by the revolving seasons; for

> —— "genial Jove averse disdains to smile,
> Forgets and curses the neglected soil."

Immediately below you are the minarets and mosques of the "City of Victory," together with the crumbling scattered tombs of the caliphs. It is a view rather remarkable than beautiful; traveller after traveller may dilate upon it, but the hand even of a first-rate artist can only faintly represent it, for his utmost skill must fail, in producing with truth those novel hues and shades of colouring which give it its chief beauty and peculiarity.

The Pasha is building a noble mosque on the citadel hill, nigh at hand to his palace there. The marble employed is of an alabaster-like transparency, and of a peculiarly soft clouded yellow hue; it is found in the Mokattam range, no great distance from Cairo, we were told; but it has one great defect, many of the pieces are so full of flaws that they have the appearance of having been bruised with hammers. The most perfect, and beautiful specimen we beheld of it was one large circular slab, forming a table in the above palace, whereon was only one flaw of any consideration. Of what style of architecture his Highness intends his mosque to be a specimen we could not very well make out. Egyptian composite, perhaps.

We met at the *table d'hote* at the hotel this day, a young Englishman of noble figure and aspect, dressed in the full costume of a Bedouin sheikh; his complexion and cast of countenance according with his Oriental costume, we at first considered him as such; for having sojourned much amongst the Arabs he was quite at home in their dress. After dinner he showed me a large herbarium of desert plants, and gave me several specimens; amongst them some of the fern *Marsilea Ægyptiaca*, gathered from the banks of the Nile, in the neighbourhood of Cairo. Botany, sketching and painting both landscapes and animals, he seemed devoted to; and proved an acquaintance with a fund of amiability and accomplishments not commonly to be met with. He wore a scarlet *abba*, or cloak, while his head was covered with the graceful *kefié*, or square yellow and green handkerchief, with a long and ornamental fringe, as usually worn by the Arab tribes farther east for a head-dress, it being thrown over a white cotton skull-cap, and folded so that one corner drops over the back, and the two others hang carelessly across the shoulders, the pendant parts serving at times, to conceal, or protect the face of the wearer: the *akat* or camel hair rope fastens this handkerchief, binding it around the crown of the head: upon his feet were sandals of that kind worn by the Wahabees; not being of fish skin, as those worn by the Bedouins of Arabia Petræa, but of wood, with a leather

thong passing between the great and second toe, and an ornamented latchet. This fellow-countryman proved to be the son of Major Sir William Lloyd, the well-known author of "A Journey from Caunpoor to the Boorendo Pass in the Himalaya Mountains;" and which work, in conjunction with Captain Alexander Gerard's Narrative of an Expedition in the same country, was edited by Mr. George Lloyd, whom we now had the pleasure of meeting.

We rode one day whilst at Cairo to a spot, some seven miles south-east of the city, known as the "Forest of Petrified Trees." Between it and Cairo is a desert tract of sand and fine gravel, dividing low and irregular sand-hills. No vegetation is there here, excepting a small species of stock, a kind of henbane, with handsome purple flowers, and here and there a knoll of dry coarse grass. Our steeds proved fiery, and much to our discomfiture, ran away with us, so that we lost the direct course, and dashing over hill and plain, came to a deep wady with precipitous sides, and peculiar isolated masses of sand standing in a row along the centre of its bed, giving the idea that a torrent had once flowed there studded with islands. From the lofty sides of this wady, looking west we beheld the emerald banks of the Nile, strikingly contrasting with the sterile spot we hailed them from.

Turning our horses' heads eastward, after wan-

dering about for a long time, we came upon a tract covered with fragments of porphyry mingled with petrified wood, and proceeding further, found innumerable trunks of trees petrified; some large, and others small: the longest we could find measured just twelve French metres. We brought away specimens, some of the trunks, and others apparently of the roots of the trees, the latter excessively hard, and of remarkable weight and dark colour, whilst the former were of light, transparent, silicious substance, flaking off in layers. Many more trees, and beds of oyster-shells, are to be found further east. Shaw mentions, according to Clarke, a method by which petrified palm-wood may be distinguished from any other, for "the fibres, as in the living plant, do not run straight and parallel as in other trees, but are for the most part oblique or diverging from one another in an angle of about ten degrees," from which it is to be presumed the mineralized wood at this spot is not of the palm, the fibres being straight. Our horses furiously running away with us, in spite of cruel bits in their mouths, we very soon reached Cairo again. The sky was covered with dark clouds, and, *mirabile dictu*, a few drops of rain fell as we entered the city. This is a rare phenomenon at Cairo, for though at Alexandria and along the coast it frequently rains in torrents, yet further inland it seldom does so more than three or four times a-year, and in Upper Egypt often not a drop falls for

several years together. Some of the old gateways into Cairo are very magnificent—proud works of those who rejoiced in magnificence—the Mamelukes.

Dismounting from our horses within the city, we visited the mosque of Sultan Hassan, one of the oldest in Cairo. It is usual for all, Moslem or Christian, who enter these places of worship, to uncover their feet, or at all events to remove their shoes; but they saved us here the trouble of taking off our boots on entry, by wrapping them up in pieces of linen, lest our vile heretic tread should defile the sanctuary. Traversing a large outer court, in the centre of which was a fountain for the "Faithful" to perform their ablutions at before prayer, according to the precepts of their Prophet; we passed into a large open kind of portico spread with mats, and hung with very many elegant lamps, ornamented with ostrich eggs and richly-chased silver; for this is the spot where the worshippers, bowing their faces to the ground in the direction of Mecca, offer up their prayers to Allah and the false Prophet. Five times a-day the Moslem prostrates himself before his God, responding to that four times repeated chant of melody, heard from each tall minaret, O, God! great God! great God! I testify there is no God but God! I testify there is no God but God! I testify that Mahomed is the Prophet of God! that Mahomed is the Prophet of God! Come to

prayer! come to prayer! come to the Temple of Salvation! Great God! great God! there is no God but God!" Thus chanting his solemn strain towards the four quarters of heaven, the Mooeddin echoes it from each tall minaret; then, in the city, in the field, in the highways, and byways, the sons of the faithful turn towards the sacred Caaba; and from the peasant to the potentate a general acknowledgment is offered to the Universal Spirit. "God is most great! God is most great!" reverberates from lip to lip throughout the Moslem world. Not an hour passes in the day that this noble ejaculation is not breathed forth by some members of that widely extended faith. As the words die away in the east, they are caught up in the west, and as they become faint in the west, again they rise with fresh vigour in the east; an ever-living assertion of the absolute power of the Lord, the Most High! A never-failing chant of glory.

In a chapel within this mosque of Sultan Hassan repose his bones. Some red stains upon the pavement produced from *us*, a remark; and from the old attendant Turk, a yarn. Sultan Hassan going into a far country, a treacherous Vizier usurped his throne, and upon the return of his lord and master, requested him to go back from whence he came, as he intended to relieve him of the cares of government. This request the Sultan was compelled to comply with. Years rolled on, and still the sovereign power was

in the hands of the rebellious Vizier, when one day a rich and holy dervish appeared in the City of Delight, who, founding in his zeal a splendid mosque, prepared a sumptuous banquet within the building to celebrate its perfection. The usurper, in all his stolen magnificence, attended. The repast was over; a costly revel was to succeed; the most voluptuous beauties of the East, to dance before the Sultan and his court. The host clapped his hands; but instead of the jingling of anklets, and the soft sounds of the cymbal, and the lute; the clattering of arms was heard, the dervish threw aside his sacred guise, the ungrateful Vizier quailed before his dethroned lord, the Sultan Hassan, and in a moment he and his myrmidons were cut to pieces. The blood-stained marble is a monument to treacherous ambition.

The island of Rhoda, in the Nile, off Old Cairo, is worthy of a visit. There Ibrahim Pasha has formed a garden, beautiful, it is said, in its season; but at this period the late inundation had made sad havoc with it. That remarkable tree the *cassia fistula*, with its long black pods, I saw upon this island for the first time; it is said to be common in Egypt, but I only noticed one or two on Rhoda, and one very fine one in the suburbs of Old Cairo on the approach from the modern city. There was also growing on this island a shrub of the asclepiad tribe with very peculiar seed-vessels, and from which a most astonishing quantity of milky fluid streamed

when we broke a branch off. That the violated shrub ran with milk instead of gore we could but rejoice, lest the upbraiding whines of a Polydore should have "shrunk our sinews and congealed our blood." The renowned Nilometer, a graduated shaft, the base of which is on a level with the bed of the Nile, is on this island. According to Savary, quoting from the ancient Arab historians, it was removed hither from Memphis, in the 86th year of the Mahomedan Hegira, the glory of that city having passed away.

By Mr. Lane's account, in his work on the modern Egyptians, it is about the 3d of July that the voice of the crier is generally first heard in the streets of Cairo, rejoicing the hearts of the half-suffocated inhabitants with visions of lakes and green fields; then is the chant raised in the crowded thoroughfares, "The treasuries of the bountiful are full! and at the gate there is no scarcity! God hath given abundance, and increased the river, and watered the high lands, and the mountains, and the sands and the fields! The Lord is bountiful! Bless ye Mahomed!" It must be an exciting scene indeed when the breaking of the banks of the canal* to admit the fat

* This canal is connected with the Nile close to Old Cairo, and, entering the southern quarter, traverses the modern city, supplying it during the inundation with water: but the bed of the canal being considerably above the bed of the river, it is almost dry during several months in the year; and moreover a dam prevents the

waters of the river takes place; to hear, the shouts of song, the firing of guns, and the music of psalteries and pipes, as, rushing forward like giants refreshed with wine, the infatuated hundreds plunge in to embrace the welcome waters, as the mud representative of the beautiful virgin sacrificed of old, is borne away by the stream, midst golden showers. And then how pleasant must it be to see the City of Delight reflected in the glassy flood; her squares no longer arid dusty spaces, surrounded with shrivelled and scorched trees; but wide lakes, edged with flourishing acacias dipping their thirsty foliage; whilst gorgeous boats glide here and there freighted with daughters of love, whose voluptuous laugh, borne across the rippling mirror, trembles on your ear.

entrance of the waters of the Nile until they have arrived at a certain height, at which time the festive cutting of the barrier takes place.

CHAPTER XI.

CAIRO.

Heliopolis.—Fountain of the Sun.—Ficus sycamorus.—Egyptian swallow.—Grievous murrain.—Mirage.—Boy with a tail.—Curious birds.—Gardens of Shubra.—Moroc or Honey Guide.—Christian proselytes.—Cerastes Cornua.—Serpent charmer.

The obelisk at Heliopolis, is one of the greatest attractions in the neighbourhood of Cairo. Though the site of this ancient city presents little else but heaps of pottery and rubbish, yet this one venerable monument remains to testify the situation of the City of the Sun, "On," the Magnificent! from whence flowed all the wisdom and learning of the Egyptians. But wisdom and folly dwelt together in those days, as at present, and *Bethshemesh* bore, and merited, the Jewish name of *Bethaven*, "the house of vanity;" for she gave herself up to gross idolatry, and, bowing down to wood and stone, the fearful threat fulmined against her by the word of the Lord, which came "unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes," was executed; "I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the King of Babylon my servant, and he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death, to death; and such as are for cap-

tivity, to captivity; and such as are for the sword, to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire."—In the time of Herodotus "On" was again great, and her inhabitants were "the most ingenious of all the Egyptians."

Abdallatif (A.D., 1200,) found considerable remains on her site, amongst which he makes mention of "*two* obelisks," around which, says he, "are an innumerable multitude of others; these are but of half or a third of the height of the larger: and here, are found frightful and colossal figures in hewn stone, more than thirty cubits long." An Arabian writer of a still earlier period, also makes mention with amazement of an obelisk there, "a square column nearly 100 cubits high, and of one single stone, standing on a base of marble which looks like a house. On its summit is a coating of copper as handsome as gold, on which is represented the figure of a man seated, and looking towards the east. This column is one of the wonders."

A garden of oranges and pomegranates enclosed by a mud wall now surrounds this graceful remnant of the City of the Sun. As the curator of this

garden employed more time than I had to waste, before bringing me the key of the door leading into it, annoyed at his apathetic progress, I scaled the wall; this put him on the *qui vive*, and pouring forth a torrent of curses, probably directed against my great-great-grandmother, and my beard, he hastened towards me, fearing the loss of his backsheesh; but I neither noticed him nor his ejaculations, till he ran to a bush, and gathering some fine oranges, presented them to me. For minute descriptions of this obelisk many travellers may be referred to. A peculiar species of bee, with black bodies and red heads, had marked out the hieroglyphics in a very praiseworthy manner; having filled every stroke of the chisel up with a light coloured clay, composing their habitations, and contrasting with the red granite of the monument itself. Just before arriving at the obelisk on the tract from Cairo, you pass the village of *Materieh*, surrounded by beautiful groves, near one of which is a spring known by the name of *Ain-shems*, or Fountain of the Sun. The water that gushes from thence is of the purest quality, for it jetted forth to assuage the thirst of the Virgin Mary and Joseph, when wearied with their flight from the dominions of the relentless Herod, they tarried at this spot to rest; yet, according to the legend, even there they could not find the peace they sought, but fled beneath the foliage of a neighbouring sycamore fig, which opening its

vast trunk afforded them shelter within it. Some of the twigs of this tree, like a good pilgrim, I broke off and preserved as specimens. It is interesting, indeed, on another account; for of that species of timber were the ancient mummy cases made, which thousands of years have failed to decompose, of so durable a nature is the substance of the wood. My Copt attendant informed me that the fruit is not unpleasant, but of no fine flavour. It was now three or four months too early for me to prove it, as it does not ripen till June. In the great square at Cairo are two most noble trees of this species, but for centuries the Etesian winds have wreaked their fury on them, crippling in a melancholy manner their gigantic wide-spread branches. Mr. Woodhead and I had left Cairo in company to-day for Heliopolis, but perceiving in the outskirts of the city some peculiar birds, and having left my gun behind me, I turned my donkey's head, and urged him back to the hotel with the greatest speed he was capable of exerting; but trains of camels, some laden with millstones, and some with huge panniers full of mud, continually bore down upon us in the narrow streets, delaying our progress. Not heeding the fearful blows they bestowed upon us with their weighty burthens, onward they swung, with their heads high in air, and that peculiarly affected gait, which makes the camel one of the most ludicrous animals under the sun. Then would follow donkey

after donkey, laden with broad hampers full of vegetables, or perhaps stones for building, which bang in the most unmerciful manner against the legs of the passenger. However, my little steed showed his wisdom whenever he met any of these his brethren laden with greenmeats; for, much to my amusement, he would dash his nose into the passing pannier, and seizing a fine carrot, or other delicate morsel, trot off. At last he carried this too far, for selecting a fine large bunch of vegetables from the back of a passing friend, he took to his heels with an air of peculiar satisfaction not at all reciprocated by the owner of his prize, who infuriated gave chase, and with the most discordant yells, caught the robber vainly endeavouring to pass a train of hateful camels; showering bitter curses on my head, as if I was the thief, he seized his property and marched off. It is indeed almost impossible to ride through the streets of Cairo without a runner before you, armed with a good whip. This is especially necessary for a Frank, as he is always liable to insult when pushing his way through a Mahomedan crowd; particularly if he by any accident treads on the toes of a holy dervish, or a naked filthy saint, though the abominable state of impurity of the latter would always lead a Frank to avoid contact with him if possible. There were many instances of Franks being insulted whilst we were at Cairo, and some of these were very atrocious. Having obtained my gun from the

hotel, I gallopped back again towards Heliopolis to rejoin my friend. By the way I killed a swallow, distinguishable from the English bird, by having the whole of its breast and under part of a red copper colour. There were many flying about, and all of the same plumage; perhaps merely the southern winter plumage of the English one. Shooting a bird sitting on a palm tree, it fell over a lofty mud wall, which, with considerable difficulty, I scaled, and not dropping the other side upon the "look before you leap" principle, found myself floundering in a pomegranate bush; thankful was I that it was not a prickly pear.

Picking up my game, and gazing upon the beautiful orange grove around, my meditations were disturbed by a rush amongst the trees, and a rather excited voice, causing me to make for the wall again, at the top of which I arrived just in time to see a very ugly black emerge from the shrubs with a rough agricultural instrument in his hand. Greeting him from my elevated situation, with "*Salaam aleikoum*—peace be unto you!" he very much astonished me with a great display of oratory in his mother tongue, accompanied with the most exciting gesticulations and contortions; and as I deemed myself in his eyes, a mere weed in the garden, I took the liberty of putting the wall between us. An uglier specimen of human kind I never met with; and if the tongue in which he spoke was Nubian, it is not an enchanting language by any means.

The villages on the way to Heliopolis, were redolent with the most offensive smell, being encircled with dead cattle; buffaloes and cows. In fact, the whole atmosphere of lower Egypt at this time was infected with the exhalations of putrid carcases, for a "very grievous murrain" was upon the cattle. Hundreds were seized day after day, and died in awful agonies; indeed it might be said that "All the cattle of Egypt died." Cultivation was put a stop to; lands lay arid and bare that should have been clothed with the rich verdure of spring; not the sound of a water-wheel was to be heard; for where were the oxen to turn them? hardly one was to be found in the land of Egypt, and irrigation was consequently at a stand-still. Taking this into consideration, how heavy was this same calamity inflicted by the "Lord God of the Hebrews" upon the tyrannous detainers of his people!

My Copt said, that in Nubia the pestilence had not appeared, and large parties were now sent there by the Pasha to bring oxen into Lower Egypt; but most of those brought down, quickly died: the inhabitants of the land quaked with distress and fear, for they deemed that a severe visitation of plague was certain to ensue. Vultures and dogs had not had such a season for revel for a very long time; they ate their fill, and gloated, lay down to sleep by the putrifying mass, then rose to eat again. In one place I observed a live dog, eating a dead

dog, a most unmannerly proceeding, when there was so much beef around.

On my way back, that curious and beautiful phenomenon, the "mirage," gave the distant plain the appearance of a vast lake, most beautifully diversified with islands, covered with palm. I regretted I had not my sketch-book, as a more perfect picture of lake scenery could not well have been offered to view. There being no wind, it lay a calm and motionless mirror reflecting its islands and the surrounding landscape; but when there is any breeze, it is otherwise, presenting a waving undulating motion, and irregularly breaking in appearance. The natives call this deceitful phenomenon *sérab*, or superficial water; and a beautiful reference is made it in to the following passage in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Koran, "But as to the unbelievers, their works are like the vapour in a plain, which the thirsty traveller thinketh to be water, until when he cometh thereto, he findeth it to be nothing."

The French savans introduced the name mirage, deriving it from the word, *mirer*; and Monge, one of the Institute, seems to have been the first philosophically to have explained the origin of the phenomenon, which he proves to be the increasing density of the lower stratum of air as the hot sun pervades the soil; which density remains constant up to a certain height, but dis-

pates and mingles with the atmosphere above that level.*

At Ainshems, my guide, pointing to a naked boy, and shouting at the same time "Signor! Signor! un ragazzo con una códa! (a boy with a tail:) I turned, and the youth exhibited to me an elongation at the base of the spine, having much the appearance of such an appendage in an incipient state, and which doubtless would have wagged when I gave him a piastre, if it had had the power. The father of the boy came forward, and seemed very proud of his son's remarkable ornament, probably deeming him on the high road to become a Pasha. I returned to Cairo by a large establishment for horses belonging to Mehemet Ali. They were now tethered by hundreds out in the fields, the tether passing round one hind foot, and across to a fore-foot. There were said to be above a thousand here.

I obtained specimens of several birds on my way back, amongst them a small hawk, lead coloured and white, and the beautiful Nile plover, with the thorny spur on the wing. A fine peregrine falcon also fell á prey to me, whilst dashing across a noble avenue of plane trees at Shubra, in the act of chasing one of the little blue pigeons of the country, which I also brought down. One of the most interesting Egyptian birds is a small white

* In the *Décade Egyptienne*, vol. i. p. 39, Monge's philosophical explanation of this phenomenon will be found at length.

heron, which is, I believe, called by ornithologists the "buff-backed heron." Long drooping feathers, slim and light, something like those of that beautiful British bird the egret, fall gracefully over the back of. the old birds, when in good plumage; feeding in flocks they may be seen gathering round the fellahs working in the fields tame and unalarmed: so sociable and fascinating are they that after obtaining a specimen or two I always treated them with the greatest regard. Their flesh is black and hard. The first one I shot was only winged, and to secure it I was obliged to fire the other barrel amongst a number of kites and buzzards, which gave chase, and had been circling round my head sometime in order to be ready to seize my game. The multitude and impudence of these birds in Egypt no one can imagine who has not seen them. Returning by the palace and gardens of Shubra, where the Pasha delights to reside at times, I entered. It is indeed a spot of delight; citrons and limes, spice trees and pomegranates, overshadow fountains jetting the most crystal water into basins of the finest marble, whilst roses of the greatest beauty and the most exquisite fragrance, mingle their perfume with that of the orange. Within a richly ornamented *kiosk*, encircled with a marble arcade, into which open little chambers furnished with luxurious divans and paintings of exquisite art, is a large basin of costly stone, where the sultanas, (fairest daughters of

Circassia and Georgia,) sport at times in little skiffs. Woe betide the profane eye that would trespass here at such an hour; the cord of the grisly eunuch would be round his throat, and he gurgling his death song before another sun had sunk in the gilded west.

Between this "wilderness of sweets" and Cairo, I shot two birds wholly unknown to an Italian naturalist in that city, but which I find a plate of in "Bruce's Travels," under the name of "*moroc*," or bee cuckoo. "Amongst all the birds of the Abyssins," says old Jerome Lobo, "there is none more remarkable than the moroc or honeybird, which is furnished by nature with a peculiar instinct or faculty of discovering honey: They have here multitudes of bees of various kinds, some are tame like ours, and form their combs in hives. Of the wild ones, some place their honey in hollow trees, others hide it in holes in the ground, which they cover so carefully, that though they are common in the highway, they are seldom found unless by the moroc's help, which, when he has discovered any honey, repairs immediately to the road-side, and when he sees a traveller, sings and claps his wings, making many motions to invite him to follow him, and when he perceives him coming, flies before him from tree to tree till he comes to the place where the bees have stored their treasure, and then begins to sing melodiously. The Abyssin takes the honey without failing to

leave part of it for the bird, to reward him for his information." Bruce vouches for the fondness of this bird for honey, but these curious evolutions in revealing the treasure, may probably be ranked amongst the numerous absurdities related by the Portuguese traveller.

The Protestant service at Cairo is performed in an old palace of one of the Mameluke beys. We observed amongst the congregation ten or twelve dark proselytes, who sang hymns in our tongue, and prayed in our form of prayer, thus led by the worthy labours of members of the Church Missionary Society to run for the same goal, hand in hand, with those the very sight of whom their fathers loathe.

Wishing to obtain some specimens of the *cerastes cornua*, or true asp, the envenomed fangs of which the captive Cleopatra sought rather than grace the triumph of the victor at Actium, a triumph which she herself had gained him at the cost of her beloved Antony; I sent for one of that strange race, representatives of the ancient Psylli, who,

> "Skilled in the lore of powerful herbs and charms,
> Them nor the serpent's tooth nor poison harms."

He came, a gaunt tall figure, with little covering but a green turban (for he was a descendant of the Prophet). Opening a leather bag, he poured forth a number of snakes at my feet, amongst which was a huge black *cobra* and several asps, the flat horned heads of which latter give them a most venomous

and unattractive appearance. "Who shall pity the charmer that is bitten by a serpent," thought I, as taking up a small wand my friend of the green turban gave the cobra a rap on the sconce, which it furiously resenting, rose erect upon its folds, and expanding its wide neck, dashed fiercely at the aggressor's foot; but the privileged nature of the tormentor forbad the fatal bite; so that flying backwards and forwards with its head in the air, the reptile was cutting fantastic capers as indications of its rage, when suddenly I seized it by the neck, and held it out at arm's length, midst shouts of horror from the assembled credulous, and to the great disapprobation of the son of the Prophet.

Enraging the asps as he had done the cobra, the charmer now sat down on the stones, and commenced piping to them on a rude reed pipe, and styled their excited manner of moving about—dancing. Buying several of these snakes of him to preserve, he killed them for me, by inserting a pinch of snuff in each of their mouths, which almost immediately affected them, and convulsed, with rigid folds, they died.

Bruce mentions, that in the desert of Cyrenaica, or the north-western part of the Lybian desert, this cerastes is the only species of viper that he met with and that but rarely; which he observes as refuting the supposition to be derived from Lucan, that the snakes were so numerous as to cause the destruc-

tion of the greater part of the Roman army during Cato's march to unite his forces with those of the Mauritanian Juba against Cæsar. He proved the venom of the asp by scratching eighteen pigeons upon the thigh as quickly as possible in succession, and all were dead in nearly the same interval of time. Those which I purchased had, (as I supposed,) all their fangs rubbed down, so as to destroy the reservoirs of venom. Upon questioning the charmer, he affirmed that he was proof against their poison through the virtue of an herb, which he named and promised to bring some to me, but his memory always failed him on this point, though he often visited me afterwards. As to the verity of their powers of enchantment, there are certainly many passages in Scripture which tend to confirm it; but with these serpents, as I have said before, no enchantment was necessary, as it was out of their power to do harm. Mr. Lane affirms, in spite of Bruce's assertions, that "the most expert of the snake-charmers do not venture to carry serpents of a venomous nature about their persons until they have extracted the poisonous teeth." The Italian naturalist said that there was no trick in it, but that the charmers were certainly proof against venom; but he was the father of many lies, and never failed to deceive me where he had an opportunity of doing so. I regretted failing to see the eaters of living serpents, who are still to be found at Cairo. Mr. Lane saw a snake-eater perform

the operation, which he commenced by pressing his thumb upon the reptile's back, about two inches from the head; "all that he eat of it, was the head, and the part between it, and the point where the thumb pressed, of which he made three or four mouthfuls." But Bruce's exhibitor did it much more thoroughly, for, "beginning at the tail, he eat it as one would do a carrot or stock of celery." Perhaps these fellows take snake medicinally: Pococke says, the cerastes is much esteemed for physic.

We had some thoughts of making, before leaving Egypt for Syria, the usual excursion from Cairo up to the first cataract at Ass-uan, a voyage of six hundred and forty miles, occupying sometimes thirty days or more; but finding that it would interfere with our being in the latter country so early as might be wished, we gave up the project, making up our minds to take, instead, a short trip into the valley of Fayoum, the "Nome of Arsinoe," said to derive its modern name from the ancient Egyptian word *phiom*, "*the sea*," as referring to the great lake Mœris within it.

This district is a depression in the Lybian hills flanking the valley of the Nile on the west, and occupying a space of about forty miles in length from east to west, and thirty in breadth from north to south.

CHAPTER XII.

EXCURSION TO FAYOUM.

Introduction to a Nomadic life.—Water skins.—Travelling costumes.—Old Cairo.—Albanian soldiers.—Djiza.—Arabs.—Pyramids.

Our trip to the Valley of Fayoum (a region hitherto visited by few but *savans*, led by the spirit of research to seek there the site of that most wonderful (or at all events, most useful) of the magnificent works of the ancient kings of Egypt—the Lake Mœris) was projected by us, not with any scientific intentions, not with the hope of adding anything to the antiquarian harvest, of which much still remains to be gleaned from the districts around the site of *Crocidilopolis*, but it was a journey undertaken by us merely to serve as an introduction to that style of life we were now on the verge of entering upon for a considerable period. It would be well indeed for any traveller, before committing himself to the desert for an extensive journey, to make an experimental trip of this kind, if he can afford the time; for by so doing he not only becomes well acquainted with the admeasurement of his tent, and learns how to stow away to

the greatest advantage what necessaries he may be burthened with, in order to economize duly the small space included in that admeasurement, but moreover many little matters are, in the course of such an introductory trip, demonstrated to him by experience, which if he had not had this opportunity of learning before launching forth upon the desert ocean for his "grand voyage," might cause him great inconvenience, and perhaps suffering. Behold him in the mid desert, in the power of perhaps a Copt or Greek attendant, who, having stealthily consumed all the little stock of brandy, wine, or other precious restorative, (which his master so carefully placed in the canteen, with the full intent that it should only be brought forth when he might be "ready to perish," or greatly burthened in soul,) now finding less of the fat of the land around him than he expected, forthwith turns sullen, insults his master, if he will allow him to do so, and if not, wreaks his disgust upon the devoted heads of the Arab escort, who then in their turn become incensed and ill-disposed; so that the mirror of the unfortunate traveller's imagination, which before starting reflected so fair a scene of liberty, novel scenery, and customs to be enjoyed, becomes sullied with black melancholy, as, brooding on his then present annoyances, he beholds a dreary prospect of weeks or months to come without opportunity of getting rid of his tormentors. "Oh me miserum!" vainly he may

ejaculate, for neither physic simple or compound is within his reach. Again, it is not a pleasant thing to awake in the night and find yourself "sub Jove frigido," without anything betwixt you and the stars, except a cold biting wind, which with a furious blast has just lifted your tent from above you, and taking advantage of which, your goods and chattels may be seen, by the light of the moon, radiating in all directions; your palm-wood boxes, wherein is your crockery and edibles, running races with your copper pots over the plain, without any regard to the rules of the turf against jostling, much to the detriment of your next day's meal; and then when you have sufficiently recovered your equanimity to demand information why and wherefore this has happened, the consolation probably which is offered you is, that your *wooden* tent-pegs will not penetrate the bed of hard gravel upon which you have encamped, and that you ought to have supplied yourself with *iron* ones before leaving Cairo; but which now you cannot obtain for love or money, for many a day's journey of uninhabited desert lies both behind and before you. After this freak of the winds, a report will in all probability reach you that your cups, plates, and other articles of earthenware are smashed; then, too late, you become aware that tin, not crockery, is suitable for a Bedouin mode of life. Many such little grievances might be evaded by a little trial beforehand, which thus enables you

both to find out the disposition of your attendants and what may be necessary or unnecessary to take with you: "Sapientis est providere!" We had already purchased tents, a large one for ourselves and a smaller one for our Arab cook and Elias. The cost of these two tents was 400 piastres, or about four pounds English, according to the currency at that time, though before our ultimate departure it had become so low as ninety-six and ninety-four piastres to the English sovereign. Our own tent was a very good-sized one, with walls; and we were told we had made a good bargain. The chief articles of provision carried by us, consisted of chicken, maccaroni, and rice, together with a quantity of Arab bread (which is made either of barley, rye, or *doura*, a species of millet) in the form of flat round cakes, very similar to our pancake. This bread we at first did not dislike, but after a time took the greatest aversion to it, chiefly, I believe, from its extreme dirtiness. It somewhat resembles in taste that Irish composition called "fadge." Coffee and tobacco was not forgotten by us; indeed the traveller in the East soon unites with the Oriental in paying great homage to these latter articles of luxury. We also stowed away in the great palm-wood box, which contained all these good things, a jar of preserved cherries, which prove a most refreshing addition to a dish of rice. These preserves they bring to Cairo, from Damascus and from Djidda. A small canteen, which we had

purchased at Malta contained a few knives, forks, spoons, &c., and often served us for a table whereon to use them. A goat-skin full of water, was slung upon one of the donkeys: this being the common water skin of the country, the hide of a goat, with the apertures of the legs and tail fastened up, and the hole at the neck where the head came off, forming the mouth to pour the contents out of, and to which part a spout is sometimes fixed. Before use these skins are tanned and strained out. It is from such skins the water-carriers of Cairo pour forth into a brazen cup the sweet beverage from the Nile, offering it to the weary passenger in the name of Allah, and grateful for the smallest gratuity in return, or content that God will compensate them for their charity. We had partly adopted the Oriental costume; a white muslin turban graced my head, folded around the red cloth cap called "tarbouch," beneath which I wore the usual skull-cap of white cotton: all this heaped upon the head might be imagined oppressive, but it is no more than is necessary to shield it from the excessive power of the sun; neither is it of the weight that might be supposed from its appearance, for the turban, though many yards in length, is of so light a substance, that you hardly feel the numerous folds that you are crowned with; indeed from the softness of its texture, and its fitting itself so well to the head, it is, when properly put on, far pleasanter than the English

hat. In the streets of Cairo one may see turbans of all shades of colouring from black to white, and of almost as many forms as colours; for sects and tribes are distinguished by this part of the costume; and woe betide the son of Israel that places on his head the Moslem turban! The green turbans of the descendants of the Prophet are the most conspicuous. The respect paid to this article of dress is very great. I had purchased in the bazaar a *boornooze*, a very useful as well as graceful habit, being a long flowing cloak of coarse texture, but light, with an ample hood, which, in case of exposure to sun or wind, often proved most grateful, being of sufficient dimensions to draw over the head, and lap round the face, so as in some measure to protect the eyes of the traveller from that penetrating dust and gravel, which, borne on by the sweeping *khamsin* or simoom, so often overtakes him in the desert, irritating his face and eyes, to his very great discomfort, and, in many instances, bringing on ophthalmia, a disease productive of the greatest agony. The most usual cause, however, of that fearful enemy in this country is the coldness of the night air, which contrasts so greatly with the excessive heat of the day's sun and wind; but if the eyes are at all inclined to this attack, the irritation of gravel and sand often hastens its advance. Another portion of my costume consisted of a broad red leather belt, which, encircling my waist, carried

my pistols.* This kind of girdle is formed of many slips of leather, one placed over the other, so as to afford places for pistols, knives, or whatever the wearer may deem it expedient to insert of that nature. Moreover, between it and your body may be found a convenient place to stow away one of those highly-ornamented little bags which, filled with the fragrant weed of Syrian Ladikia, proves so constant a companion of the Oriental and also of the Frank traveller in general very soon after his arrival in the East. Upon my feet I wore slippers of red morocco, light, easy, and cool, whilst across my shoulders was slung my double-barrelled Manton, for the name engraved upon it so entitled it to be called after that renowned fabricator of small arms, though, perhaps, from the circumstance of my having purchased it at Siena, in Tuscany, for the sum of six pounds, it might be inferred by some that this was a forgery; to me, however, it proved as useful as the most hopeful Manton, Purdy, Nock, or Egg of gorgeous build. It was thus arrayed I sat upon my gallant donkey in the court of the hotel on the morning of Feb. 13, awaiting the descent of my friend, who presently appeared,

* These belts are deemed by many a very great protection against the climate. They are not Egyptian, but Albanian; and I was informed that the Pasha once making his Albanian troops throw them aside, the men died off in great numbers from dysentery. With the native Orientals, the shawl around the waist takes the place of this belt.

mounted like myself, and somewhat resembling me in the hybrid character of his costume. After much unnecessary blustering with our muleteers on the part of Elias, we were to be seen winding out of the narrow street leading from the hotel, a goodly train; four prancing donkeys, two mules, one blind horse, four Copts, two Moslems, our fierce Albanian, and our illustrious selves,—thus making altogether a party of nine, being quite three more than we in any way required for such an excursion. Our cook was a particularly dirty, poverty-struck looking rascal, his whole wardrobe being on his back, and consisting only of a blue cotton kind of shirt over his body, and a dirty skull-cap on his head. Some of the rest of the crew wore the "*abbayeh*," or loose striped square-cut coat, with large sleeves, and of very coarse texture, a habit often mentioned in the holy writings, and probably such as referred to in John xix., "Woven from the top throughout." These "*abbayehs*" are of different style, according to the rank of the wearer; brown, with broad stripes of white, are those most usually worn by the lower orders, but those seen upon others of better rank are often exceedingly gay, with decoration of gold embroidery upon the back; one I purchased since at Damascus was white with gold embroidery over the shoulder, but black is the more usual colour of this garment. After leaving the city, and passing beneath one of the arches of

an aqueduct constructed in the tenth century for conveying the water of the Nile to the citadel of the metropolis, we soon arrived at the site of *El Fóstat*, or, as it is vulgarly called, "Old Cairo," but now ranking as a mere suburb, and with *Boulac* being included under the name of Grand Cairo; the metropolis thus lies in three detached portions. Our road lay over many heaps of rubbish, the site of former habitations, traversing which we met four or five soldiers of the Pasha's Albanian troops, madly rushing here and there, firing their pieces with wanton carelessness, sometimes along the ground, sometimes over their shoulders, sometimes in the air. These fellows occasionally fire at you, by way of sport, or practice; indeed I know an Englishman who was at Cairo at this very period, and played the target to some of these mad-caps. It was not far from hence that the ancient town of Babylon once stood, raised by the hands of wanderers from the hundred-gated city of Chaldea, "the Glory of Kingdoms;" who, having fled the borders of the Euphrates, appeared in Egypt as plunderers, but afterwards submitting to the Government, erected here a city, and called it Babylon, their hearts still clinging to their home.*

* Strabo, as quoted by Savary, says of Egyptian Babylon, "En remontant le Nil au-dessus d'Heliopolis on trouve le château de Babylone fortifié par l'art et la nature. Il fut construit par quelques Babyloniens qui s'y retirent avec l'agrément du souverain. Les Romains y tiennent en garnison une des trois légions qui garde

The seat of Government was transported here, when the Moslem faith, having become established, the city of Alexandria, taken by the Mahomedan forces under the command of Amrou-Ben-Alas, lost her rank as capital of the kingdom, and transferred it to Fôstat. Whether this town is upon the actual site of Babylon or not has been much discussed by the learned. At this day Old Cairo is, in truth, a miserable place, though a grand *depôt* for that bigoted sect the *Copts*, who here have many chapels; one of which is exceedingly venerated by all good Christians, for it is within a grotto where Joseph and Mary, fleeing from Herod, once took refuge. This was, it is to be presumed, after escaping from the jaws of that good-natured sycamore fig at Matarieh which so hospitably received them, as has been before related. A dismal dusty hole is this chapel, and glad enough were we to get out of its filthy precincts as quickly as possible; for the poor, and the halt, and the blind mobbed us at the door; naked saints possessed with devils, and children as naked, whose foul faces were black with flies, attracted by the filth, there carefully preserved to nullify the magic gaze.

Egyptian children, and Egyptian saints, are the most loathsome objects one is liable to meet with in

l'Egypte. Depuis cette fortresse la montaigne s'abaisse insensiblement jusqu 'au bord du Nil. Cent cinquante esclaves sont occupés continuellement à y élever les eaux par le moyen de roues et d'un aqueduc."—*Lettres sur l'Egypt.*

that country; the former, besides their excessive filthiness, having bodies most awfully distended, by being over-crammed with Doura bread: and the latter being generally drivelling idiots or real or mock madmen, whose sanctity is measured in the eyes of the faithful according to the capabilities they may possess of performing brutal and disgusting actions, such as eating glass, snakes, dung, &c. They are often to be met with, some almost or quite naked, and others covered with divers coloured shreds of cloth; and if they honour you by spitting in your face you may deem yourself a happy man, for their filthy saliva is looked upon as a precious ointment. Their reason, says the Egyptian, being taken from them, they cannot be deemed accountable for any little peccadillos they commit; and their minds being in heaven, their words are inspired; and as such are they treasured up in the hearts of their hearers, especially by the women, who adore them amazingly, so that the harem of a mad *sheikh*, or *welee*, or whatever title they may give him, generally extends through the city or district he may enjoy his repute in; and food being always supplied them with the greatest alacrity, their life is one of undisturbed freedom and luxury.

We now sought the quay of Old Cairo, where the boats from *Upper* Egypt land their cargoes and then freight again, as those from *Lower* Egypt do at Boulac. Exactly opposite the quay lies the village of Djiza, whither we were bound.

Our embarkment was the cause of great squabbling, for the moment we approached the water our jackasses were seized by many hands; some pulled the head and some the tail, until a little navy of boats was seen, each with its jackass on board, which proceeding being very contrary to our intention, a disembarkation was effected, though not without strenuous opposition both from the donkeys and the owners of the craft. At last, however, we found ourselves upon the bosom of the Nile, and quickly the desired haven was attained, setting at rest some slight quailing we had lest any sudden panic amongst our four-footed friends should move them to caper in an untoward manner, and capsize us; for we were closely packed and heavy laden. It has been much combated amongst "savans" whether this village does not occupy the spot where once stood Memphis, the capital of Egypt. But preference has been awarded to the position now occupied by the village of Metrahenny, a short space further south, opposite the pyramids of Saccara, and where are to be seen considerable remains of former grandeur, which is not the case at the village of Djiza. Neither did we see here anything to warrant the ecstatic flights of Savary and Denon, intoxicated by the beauty of the situation of this village; groves of sycamore fig and acacia are to be found here certainly, affording a grateful shade; but we did not breathe an air—"Chargé des exhalaisons aromatiques des plants et des fleurs."

for it was pregnant with effluvia anything but "aromatique," from the carcases of dead oxen and buffaloes; neither did "voluptuous houris" present us "sitting within the delectable shade of overhanging oranges and jessamine, with delicious sherbet;" but we were constrained to help ourselves to a supply of the golden fruit from the laps of some Egyptian girls at hand, anything but houris in appearance. Wheat, rye, beans, lentils, and lupins, were heaped in pyramidical lumps, near the landing place, with dirty Fellahs sitting cross-legged in their neighbourhood, waiting for purchasers.

There are large mounds of rubbish in the outskirts of Djiza, as is the case in the vicinity of nearly all Egyptian villages; partly proceeding from waste stuff brought out of them, or from fallen habitations; (for repairs are never looked to by Egyptians; when time or tempest tumbles their houses about their ears, there they leave them where they fell;) or often the site of ancient settlements are occupied by these mouldering heaps, generally composed of dusty earth mingled with enormous quantities of fragments of pottery and vitrified substances, and occasionally cerements of mummies, and bones. There is a considerable fabric of pottery at Djiza, and earthen vessels and pans were standing about for sale in great numbers; the clay seems pretty good for the purpose, and burns a light red.

A rich and highly cultivated tract of plain lies

between this village, and that sandy barrier to cultivation, upon the edge of which stand those wonderful monuments to the genius and subtle skill of the ancient inhabitants of "Mizraim," which called forth from a poet of France the beautiful exclamation—

"Leur masse indestructible, a fatiguè le tems."

Crops of a species of trefoil, with a whitish flower called by an Arabic name, signifying "Arab's grass," with lupins and other herbs, were luxuriating here in great strength; for though the Nile has departed from many of his ancient beds, and though many of the brooks are emptied and dried up, and the reeds and flags are withered, and "the fishers mourn," and "they that cast angle into the brook lament," according to the decree fulmined against this land, and recorded by the prophets:—yet is a narrow space still left, where "the rivers run about among her plants, and the little rivers are sent out amongst the trees of the field!"

Of the herb called "Arab's grass" our men devoured considerable quantities raw, and giving me some, it proved not bad, having a slight nutty flavour, and I afterwards with bread sometimes eat it. Our travelling pace being but slow, we often walked, making "détours" in search of game; amongst other birds, I shot another specimen of the little white and lead-coloured hawk, which I have mentioned as noticing in the neighbourhood of Heliopolis: but one of many Bedouins who came

forth to meet us as we neared the pyramids, took this bird from my hand, and seizing it betwixt his teeth, pulled out a mouthful of feathers, to make me understand that it was good to eat, thus spoiling it as a specimen. I have since again been told that the Arabs eat this bird, and it is the only species of bird I ever heard of their showing any predilection for. The pigeons which are so numerous in all their villages it is said they never eat! Amongst other birds, we shot some of the beautiful Nile plover, with spurs upon the pinions: they are foolish and unwary until you have fired at them once or twice; feeding in flocks in the cultivated fields, as well as upon the mud banks of the river and canals, and keeping close together, you may obtain several at a shot. They make a piping note of very peculiar sound, and often at night annoyed us, sitting near the tents, and continually keeping up their melancholy whistle. The Arabs that met us on our way were clothed in nothing but the loose "abbayeh," and assailing us on all sides with great clamour and gesticulation, ran and jumped, howled and shouted, to prove their strength of lung and limb; then grinning, they would pat us on the back to prove their amiability, and promote ours for their benefit; all these strange vagaries being intended to shew their capacity and desire to assist us in mounting the pyramids. Some of them followed us about as we wandered here and there with our guns, and shooting a

couple of the black and white spotted kingfisher, which fell in the water, in a moment their mantle was thrown aside, and they were swimming for the prey as eagerly as a water-dog for a wounded wild-fowl; then bringing it with indications of extravagant delight, again they would shroud their lank and grisly forms beneath their garment; or at times, not deeming that necessary, would carelessly throw it over the arm instead of the back. Talking amongst themselves, they are wonderfully vociferous and animated, and violent in their gesticulations, their language striking harshly on the unaccustomed ear. Yet have I heard Arabic flow from the mouths of young children sweetly and smoothly. It is the language spoken by all sects in Egypt. These Arabs were of a good height, bordering on six feet most of them, and though light of form, yet muscular and exceedingly active; their complexions of a yellow-brown, with features by no means badly formed, and teeth and eyes most brilliant; the former of purest white (to be attributed, perhaps, to their eating so little flesh), and the latter black and extremely wild and piercing. Unpleasant as was their boisterous manner, yet it was well counterbalanced by their excessive gaiety and good humour.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAYOUM EXCURSION.

Pyramids of Djiza.—Ascent of the Pyramid of Cheops.—Meditations on summit.—Moslem at prayer.—Progress of Mahomed.—The Moslem faith.—Assault on a hyæna.—Mysterious sounds.—Explore the Pyramid of Cheops.—Egyptian bats.

ARRIVED at the Pyramids, we chose a spot south-east of that of "Cephrenes," (or, Belzoni's Pyramid, as it is often called,) and there pitched our tents upon a space of sand that seemed most level and free from stones. Impatient of delay, although the sun now shone with great intensity, we immediately commenced the ascent of the Pyramid of Cheops, the largest and most eastern of those at Djiza. More and more our consciousness increased of the mighty magnitude of these structures, raised by the inhabitants of the land of Ham; as drawing near the huge masses of which they are composed, we felt more and more like grasshoppers on the face of the earth; their enormous dimensions are not duly comprehended except by comparison, neither does their loftiness, presented to the eye in an inclined plane on every side, produce that immediate acknowledg-

ment of their sublimity which the same height would do if given in the perpendicular. But now for the ascent! Delivering myself up to the tender mercies of two Arabs, and mobbed by some twenty more, they, mounting first each range of blocks, then hauled me up, but pushed and pulled by those behind, I was fain at last to send out fast and furious kicks to clear the coast, for the fearful heat reflected from the rocks, combined with all this undesirable assistance, was quite overcoming. My escort at last perceiving my serious indignation, decamped to add to the torment of my friend, who, some distance below, was also assailed by these foes to all enjoyment. The unwashed state of these Arabs renders their vicinity exceedingly offensive; for they are far from performing those ablutions and purifications prescribed by the Prophet with due regularity, when they use the "key of Paradise." Bearing in mind the Prophet's words, "O, true believers! when ye prepare yourselves to pray, wash your faces, and your hands unto the elbows, and rub your heads and feet unto the ancles; and if ye be polluted, wash yourselves all over," they tuck up their sleeves, and taking a handful of sand, use it as water; for the Prophet also said, "if ye find no water, take fine clean sand, and rub your faces and your hands therewith: God would not put a difficulty upon you." We had consumed in the ascent nearly a quarter of an hour, before arriving at the

platform on the summit; but any one might accomplish it in far less a space of time, freed from the Arabs. Indeed a gentleman I afterwards met with at Cairo, assured me that having offered to some Bedouins, a dollar for the man who would most quickly ascend and descend the Pyramid of Cheops; one of them performed the ascent and descent in five minutes and a-half, but fell insensible at the base. This is almost incredible, for the elevation of this pyramid is given at four hundred and seventy-four feet by Wilkinson, and the climbing up each range is a work of some toil. The platform on the summit is a square of thirty feet on each side, and here we sat some time to rest ourselves, and look forth upon the peculiar country stretched out beneath us. Away to the south were ranged the lesser pyramids, the Via Appia of Memphis, marking the boundary of the Libyan Desert, frowning on the verdure of the narrow valley of the Nile.* The pen of many a traveller has delineated the prospect enjoyed from thence; and who can behold it without lively emotion and astonishment? Who can behold the ancient "granary of the world," once a mighty space of

* The length of the valley of Egypt from the cataracts to Cairo, according to Lane, is about four hundred and fifty geographical miles, and from Cairo to the sea-coast in a straight line about ninety miles; the width of the valley being from eight to ten miles, rarely more; and the width of the Delta about one hundred and twenty.

inconceivable fertility, now a narrow strip of cultivation, of but a few short miles in breadth, and not cry with the Prophet Ezekiel, "Howl ye, howl ye, woe worth the day! For Egypt is fallen, and the pride of her power is come down; she is desolate in the midst of countries that are desolate, and her cities are in the midst of cities that are wasted. The land is waste, and all that is therein is desolate." Who can behold the fields of Mizraim, once swarming with a wise and enlightened nation, but now with a people writhing beneath the cursed despotism of a tyrannical ruler, beneath whose pernicious system of government justice has given way to extortion and rapine, whilst poverty and wretchedness rise pre-eminent, the fruit of wanton oppression,—who, I say, can behold this, and not call to mind the declamation against her prosperity from the Most High God, by the mouths of his Prophets? Pharaoh, King of Egypt, was, like the Assyrian, "fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches.—The cedars of the garden of God could not hide him; the fir-trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut-trees were not like his branches, nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty." But now Egypt is "sold into the hand of the wicked." And where are her twenty thousand cities; where her seven millions of inhabitants? About two thousand of the former, and two millions of the latter humbly represent them. Yes; in spite of the energetic

spirit of her present ruler, yet is she a wilderness in every respect, in *comparison* to what she was when like in her greatness to "a cedar on Lebanon, with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of a high stature, her top was among the thick boughs." Her present ruler, indeed, may (as it has been observed) prove the layer of the foundation-stone for that happiness which is again promised her people by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah, after duly suffering the fruit of their iniquity and pride; for the brilliant and active talent of Mehemet Ali is indeed working wonders, tending to increase of power and wealth, which may gradually retrieve her inhabitants from their present uncivilized state. Introducing machinery, establishing manufactories, and otherwise in such manner promoting in some degree the improvement of the country over which he wields his iron sceptre; in course of time she may, through his efforts, regain her excellency in works of industry and art as of old, when with Tyre and Sidon she competed the palm for cunning workmanship; and better times may come, when, beneath another sway, the now enslaved and grovelling inhabitants may be enabled to partake of the fruits of these new introductions, and improvements of their country's commerce, and not see them wholly swallowed up and disappear within the greedy grasp of their Pasha, adding to his coffers without relieving their depressed state, crushed with heavy imposts, taxed even to their

palm trees,* robbed of that which they by the sweat of the brow obtain. Well is his nefarious system illustrated in Lord Lindsay's work. "He taxes all the means of industry, and of its improvement, and then taxes the product. Irrigation is the great means of cultivation and fertility. He therefore charges fifteen dollars tax upon every Persian wheel; and as the people can find a way of avoiding it by manual labour, raising the water in a very curious way by pole and bucket, he lays a tax of seven dollars and a-half even on that simple contrivance. He then, in the character of universal land proprietor in his dominions, orders what crop shall be sown, herein consulting his own interest solely, in direct opposition to that of his people. He settles the price of the crop at which the cultivator is obliged to sell it to him, for he can sell it to no one else; and if he wishes to keep any himself he is obliged to buy it back from Government at the new rate which the Pasha has fixed for its sale, of course many per cents. dearer than when he bought it. Numberless are his little tricks for saving money: thus when he has to receive money, it has always to be paid in advance; taxes particularly he collects always just before the plague breaks out, so that though the people die he has their money; in pay-

* Mr. Lane tells us that the tax upon the palm trees has been calculated to amount to about 100,000*l.* sterling; the trees are rated according to their qualities, generally at a piastre and a-half

ing the troops and others it is *vice versa*, he pays after date, and gains also upon the deaths." Mehemet Ali, to satisfy his cravings for wealth, neither regards the life or property of his subjects;* he thirsts with an unquenchable thirst for gold to feed his own avarice, but not that his treasury may be in a good state to relieve the calls of the nation. He resembles the Giaour, who every time the "Caliph Vathek, the grandson of Haroun al Raschid," cast a victim into his foul jaws, incessantly repeated with a sullen muttering, "More! more!" for thus his rapacity increases fast as the prey falls to him. "He still brayeth, when he hath grass, and loweth over his fodder!" After remaining on our lofty position half an hour or more, our eyes rambling from desert to verdure, from verdure to desert, certain inward sensations reminded us that nature craved something more substantial than food for the eyes and thoughts alone; therefore rapidly descending to our tent, we were glad to find it ready for our reception, and every thing in good campaigning order; guns, &c., lashed to the tent-pole, mattresses spread, canteen placed for a table, and a dish of kid disguised in rice awaiting our arrival. Thus our first essay of a

* During our stay at Cairo, all the light *gazees* (or gold pieces of about twenty piastres value,) were by a Royal edict called in, by which the private coffers of the Pasha were said to profit immensely. A baker caught in the act of passing one of these condemned coins, was immediately bastinadoed till he died!

Nomadic life was enamouring enough. The kid rapidly disappeared, and after taking a few whiffs of Ladikia and a cup of coffee, we sat us down upon the sand and sketched. Whilst thus engaged I beheld one of our Moslem followers prostrate in prayer; gazing in that quarter where his imagination beheld the minarets of the Holy City, he devoutly dropped upon his knees, and smiting with his face the dusty ground, with solemn prostrations of humility, ejaculated "God is great!" and called for blessings on his head from him, who, in the Moslem's mind, ranks next to God! There are in Egypt, it is said, above a million and a-half who cry upon the name of that false Prophet, whose forceful genius planted in the minds of his disciples a superstitious and erroneous faith with such astonishing success, that though a thousand years and more have sped since first the seed was laid, yet even now it flourishes with little sign of withering. The greatest of all false prophets that have appeared, since the prediction that such should appear, is Mahomet! He stood forth, and took advantage of that period when, pure as was the fountain-head from whence gushed the waters of Christianity, dark and sullying superstition had mingled with them in their course, and thus distracting them, presented a fit opportunity to raise a barrier to its majestic flood. But nevertheless, beneath that barrier was buried idolatry and Polytheism then reigning pre-eminent in Arabia.

Causing the Sabian, and the Magian, to turn away from stocks and stones and from the worship of the heavenly bodies, Mahomed directed their adoration to the "*One true God.*"*

The mind of that extraordinary being, was by nature endued with such wondrous energy, that the want of culture and instruction presented but little restraint. The book of nature was open to him, and it was sufficient; studying, and deeply contemplating man, and the age he lived in, he quickly became aware that the absence of learning and artificial philosophy, would offer but a slight obstacle to an all-powerful genius skilfully guided. Meditating the revolution he had in view, he was not unmindful of the proneness of the human heart to carnal delights; therefore did he gild the tenets of his doctrine with dazzling promises of rapturous luxuries for the faithful, of a nature which they could fully understand, firing their Oriental imaginations with poetical descriptions of the exquisite pleasures of Paradise; and thus, aided by natural eloquence, beauty of person, and a daring spirit, bridled by judgment, the conquest was wrought. Once gaining a firm hold upon his disciples, by subtle art and tempting promises of sensual enjoy-

* Before Mahomet, the religion of the Arabians may be said to have been *Sabian*, though there were disciples of many other doctrines amongst them; of which the *Magian*, introduced by the Persians seems to have ranked next in strength to the Sabian. As to the tenets of these sects, *vide Prideaux's Connect.*

ments without rein, in future immortality; then forth he drew the sword of fanaticism, and wielding it on high, rushed on to stamp the new-born faith in blood! And the son of a citizen of Mecca became a mighty chief, and the founder of a swiftly-increasing, and now wonderfully extended heresy!

Towards dusk perceiving a jackall, or a fox, creeping stealthily towards the tent, I ran in for my gun; but upon returning found that it suspected treachery, and was hieing off out of shot. Understanding that hyænas frequent the caverns of the Pyramids, and surrounding tombs; after the sun had set, we took our guns, and roamed about some time with one of the Arabs in order to obtain a shot if possible; but fortune did not favour us, for none appeared to be supper-hunting at that hour; we therefore returned, grateful that we had not been engulphed in any of the numerous holes leading to catacombs, or shafts sunk by explorers, which render walking about in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids after dark, a very perilous undertaking, even with an Arab who pretty well knows where they lie. For a few piastres we procured one of the Bedouins to act as patrol during the night, lest some of our property should strike the fancy of any of his friends. This was rather upon the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief; but Bedouins seldom prove unfaithful, if so hired, regarding their

honour at stake, and feeling magnified in importance. Before laying down we warned him to awake us if any four-footed visitors made their appearance in our neighbourhood; and just before getting to sleep, he came creeping on all fours towards the door of the tent to apprize me that game was at hand. Looking in the direction he pointed with his finger, I could discern a large animal about sixty yards off, engaged with some bones and garbage thrown out of the cook's tent; suddenly as it crouched upon the ground seemingly aware an enemy was at hand, I fired, but apparently without effect, for it trotted off at a leisurely pace, which a second bullet in his wake, but slightly accelerated. My disappointment at the dignified unconcern with which he treated my attack upon him was considerable, as I coveted his skin for a counterpane during my wanderings.

The canopy of heaven glistened with her thousand lamps; the last echo of my attempt upon the life of the hyæna had died away amidst the hollow caverns of the Pyramids; and all was hushed and still as death, when suddenly, as crouched at the tent-door I gazed upon the dark outline of those colossal forms,

> "Standing sublime,
> 'Twixt earth and heaven, the watchtowers of Time,
> From whose lone summit, when his reign hath past
> From earth for ever, he will look his last,"

a melancholy chorus floated on the air, now

in the distance, now nigh at hand, then again falling faint upon the ear; a chorus of broken and bitter wailings. Methought the spirits of the ancient priests of Isis, at first paralyzed by my audacity, had now burst forth in chidings for the outraged silence of the night, for the profane awakening of echoes from those mysterious sanctuaries devoted to the response of their sacred chants alone; from those gigantic masses, which, (at that hour doubly magnified by the uncertain veil drawn over them,) centuries of ages past stood towering above many a solemn train engaged in the mysteries of their faith; above many a festive sacrifice; before dark Typhon overwhelmed with gloom the brilliancy of Osiris! As intently I listened to the mournful plaints still murmuring faintly on the air, a solitary jackall cantered swiftly by, then disappeared, he to his chase, and I to my mat, relieved at the *denouement* of the wild serenade.

The Bedouin tells you that the hyæna will attack a solitary person, but I doubt it unless they are driven to do so in self-defence. That these people have a great fear of such wild animals I have often noticed, and had it exemplified during our journey through the desert by a young Bedouin of our train: for having left something behind us where we had stopped to lunch during the day, when encamping in the evening he was offered two dollars (an enormous sum in their eyes) to return for its recovery, but refused, on account of the hyænas he

said; but afterwards, seeing we thought him a coward, attributed his fear to certain evil-minded Jins or Efreets he should be liable to meet with on his road. Bruce tells us that in Abyssinia he had fought this beast above fifty times, hand to hand, with a lance or spear; but says "he dies oftener flying than fighting;" and that hunters with a torch will go into his cave, and throwing a blanket over him, will haul him out! It seems that they do not always confine themselves to carrion, but occasionally feed on the roots of the dwarf palm, and certain bulbous roots: but carrion, it is well known, is much more welcome to them; and when at night they come forth from the caves in the mountains, and the ancient tombs, and other excavations in the plains, they prowl here and there singly, in earnest search for any unfortunate son of the desert or fallen pilgrim, who may have been consigned to his shallow grave of sand; from whence this foul *ghool* will surely drag him, and leave nothing but his bones to bleach in the sun.

We had arranged early the following morning to enter the Pyramid of Cheops, so industriously explored and minutely examined by Mr. Davison, formerly our Consul at Cairo, and afterwards by the untiring perseverance of Mr. Caviglia, whose spirited researches turned to ridicule the army of *savans* following in the wake of the modern Cambyses, whose lungs could ill sustain the close atmosphere reeking with the voidings of bats,

and whose hearts quaked within them when "la lumière etait pâle et la respiration plus genée." Chattering Bedouins awoke us by day-break, and looking forth from the tent, I saw a party squatting in a ring, evidently holding an exciting argument, a warm debate. Inquiring of Elias the point in discussion, he told me they had been gambling, and one had lost all his worldly possessions, even to the cloak upon his back, his only garment, his abbayeh. Never since have I seen Arabs thus engaged contrary to the precepts in the Koran, where the Prophet says, "Infidels will ask thee concerning wine and lots: answer, in both there is great sin, and also some things of use unto men; but their sinfulness is greater than their use." And again, in still stronger language, exclaims, "O true believers! surely wine, and lots, and images, and divining arrows, are an abomination of the work of Satan; therefore avoid them, that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissensions and hatred among you, by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God and from prayer: will ye not therefore abstain from them?" The word rendered *lots*, Sale considers to include all games of chance, and so it is considered to intend, by all good Mahomedans. The Bedouin mode of sitting, is to rest the ham upon the calf of the leg, a position miserable for a Frank to endure even for a few minutes; but thus they will sit for hours at ease, looking upon

our fashion of resting as of course far inferior to their own in comfort. We were once amused by an Arab Sheikh, who, after gazing at a friend for some time, sitting upon a canteen by way of a chair, whilst he himself squatted nigh at hand, eastern fashion, asked, "Whether it did not give him great pain, to sit so long, in so awkward a position?" Engaging two or three Arabs to accompany us, we commenced our day's work by creeping through the narrow entrance on the northern face of the Pyramid of Cheops, and after traversing the sloping passage (which from similar ones being found in most of the explored Pyramids sloping at the same angle, has led many to suppose one great view of these structures to be connected with the science of astronomy, these entrance passages being places well adapted for the observation of the transit of particular stars across the meridian), ascended the inclined plane, leading to the celebrated "Queen's Chamber," and afterwards that leading to the "King's Chamber," as they have respectively been named; and which, together with the passages leading to them, have so often been the theme of antiquarian pens. Through the side wall of the King's Chamber (which is said to be about thirty-seven feet long, by seventeen in width, and twenty in height), an entrance has been broken in the granite wainscotting by some industrious pryer into hidden mysteries. My companion was satisfied with his labour thus far, and returned; but having

made up my mind, before retiring, to obtain a specimen of the numerous bats that inhabited the shady regions around me, and considering that there was but little chance of capturing any in these lofty chambers, I put in practice a manœuvre which I had once before devised and carried out with some success in a mountain cavern in the Pyrenees, and the aim of which was to get some of these web-winged gentry before me in a narrow passage, where it was impossible to fly by me to its mouth. Thinking this orifice in the King's Chamber likely to suit my plan, I crept into it on hands and knees, and found a confined passage, where it was often necessary to drag myself on as well as I could by means of my arms, whilst flat on my face. After proceeding for a considerable distance, hearing before me the flitting wings of my game, whose solitary retreat I had thus invaded, I found that it was exactly as I most desired, a "cul de sac," evidently worked upon speculation by some energetic antiquary, and deserted at the point I had now arrived at, where was a place just large enough for myself and the Arab, who had remained with me, to stand upright. Great was the hurry-scurry our presence created, for there were bats flying in our faces, bats pendant from the roof, and every cranny between the mighty blocks was full of bats. Suddenly, whilst meditating a glorious triumph, graced with many a captive, a rush of wings took place, and we were in dark-

ness! Both I and my Arab huntsman exerted our lungs to make our companions hear, whom we had left in the King's Chamber, but the hollow echo of our own voices alone responded; so that the only remedy left to avoid a dishonourable retreat was, to despatch the Arab to get out as he could and obtain another light, whilst I remained in this dark and suffocating hole. It was so long before my brown friend appeared again, that I began to fear he had played me a trick, or lost his way, and gladly saw I a glimmering of light at last. The fact was, the rest of the party had gone out of the Pyramid, rendering it necessary for him to follow them, which had caused this delay. Re-commencing my attack, which proved very successful, I made my way to the King's Chamber again, with my Fez cap full of captives; for no other place had I where to incarcerate them.

I afterwards entered many passages not usually penetrated, some of which were so exceedingly low and of such foul atmosphere and suffocating heat that it required great efforts and perseverance to creep along in them at all, and moreover every moment, our light was in danger of being again extinguished by the web-winged inhabitants. Some of these passages terminated in deep chasms, the depth of which could only be judged of by throwing stones down. These chasms and shafts, sunk in many of these dark retreats, render groping through them rather precarious work, and require the explorer to be

guarded in his movements. My Arab began to tire of keeping company with me, and several times objected to proceed, but by dint of repeating the word "*Backsheesh*," with a most magnanimous expression of future generosity, I led him, with a submissive "Tieb! tieb! good! good!" to creep on again.

CHAPTER XIV.

FAYOUM EXCURSION.

Explore Pyramid of Cephrenes.—Admeasurement of Pyramids.—Lake near Abousir.—Wild fowl.—Papyrus.—Pyramids of Saccara.—Abd Allatif's Relation.—Abousir Honey.—Difficulty in finding Encampment.—Prussian Savans.—Pelicans.—Pyramid.—Ibis pit.—Mummied cats.

RIGHT glad was I, once more to breathe fresh air, for what with excess of exertion, and the penetrating dust imbibed, blood was issuing from my nose, and I was nearly choked. Those who have not entered the smaller passages in the Pyramids, cannot form an idea of the wonderful perseverance, labour, and determination, that such men as Belzoni, Davison, Caviglia, and Salt evinced, in working day after day, month after month, in such horrible dungeons, where an intolerable heat and dust, render breathing exceedingly painful; and where the reeking of bats' ordure, with which in many parts the surface is covered several inches thick, makes the process of winding along on one's face very unpleasant. Abd Allatif speaks of the entering these Pyramids as an act of great boldness, and only undertaken by those excited

"by desperate cupidity, and by chimerical expectation." Some of his companions, however, entered, and detailed to him on their return the wonderful things they had seen, and that the passage "was so full of bats and their excrements as to be almost closed, and the bats were as large as pigeons." Amongst the tombs up the country the large bats are said to be extremely numerous; but in none of the Pyramids we entered did we meet with any other than two small species, the one distinguished by its tail, which is almost as long as a mouse's tail, but much slimmer, whilst its rump and abdomen are quite devoid of fur, and the nostrils very similar to those of that very peculiar British bat, the "horse-shoe bat:" and the other species, of the same very light brown colour as the former, and with a similar head, but devoid of the tail. Abd Allatif records the ascending of the Pyramid of Cheops, as a great feat, not that he ventured to do it himself, but "hearing that there was a person in the village who had done it," he for a trifle prevailed upon him to accomplish it before him. From his thus mentioning it, some writers have inferred that probably the original coating was on in the time of that traveller, as it is supposed to have been in Pliny's time, from his making particular mention that the inhabitants of Busiris sometimes accomplished the ascent. But Abd Allatif relates that the man ascended without any difficulty, and "even quicker

than we should a staircase, and without taking off his shoes or his dress, which was very wide," therefore surely it should rather be inferred, that the structure was, as to its exterior, much in the same state in the thirteenth century (when Abd Allatif travelled), as at the present time, as we can but imagine that if it had at that time the coating on of fine marble mentioned by Herodotus, the ascent would have required great labour, whereas in its present state, the blocks being rough and broken about, as well as in many places disturbed from the regular range, you may ascend with comparative ease, choosing, at each gradation, your place to mount the next. Many observers have denied that there are any signs of the great Pyramid having been coated at all. Amongst those who do so are Norden, Thevenot, and others of note. Shaw considers, that it was intended that they should all have had the gradations filled up with prismatical stones, that, like the pyramidical tomb of Caius Cestius at Rome, all sides should have been smooth. In the *lesser* and the *greater*, says he, "it is evident this has never been attempted," but in that called Cephrenes', he remarks, as all must who see it, that great part of the top is filled up. Leaving this proud monument attributed by the Egyptian priests (according to the historian of Halicarnassus) to Cheops, or Chemmis, who Dr. Hale, in his "Analysis of Chronology," places as the ninth King of the fifth dynasty, and

reigning B. C. 1082, we adjourned to that no less remarkable one dedicated to his brother Cephrenes, Cephres, or Sesak, who wielded sway over Egypt after Cheops had enjoyed it for half a century. Leaving my companion outside, I entered with an Arab those passages which, (in spite of the assertion of Herodotus that this pyramid was devoid of chambers,) the indefatigable Belzoni laid open, thus again putting to the blush, by his solitary ingenuity, the combined science of the French antiquaries attached to Napoleon's army. The Arabs seem only to know this Pyramid by the name of "Belzoni," and pointing to it, always pronounced his name. Within it there is also a large chamber, said to be, by admeasurement, forty-six feet in length, fifteen feet three inches in breadth, and twenty-three feet six inches in height. Upon one of the side-walls, marked in very large letters, with a burnt stick, is the name of Belzoni, with the date, 1818. After exploring many of the lesser passages here, as in the other, I returned, and joining my companion, made for the tent. Thus had we slightly looked into these vast piles, one of which, according to Herodotus, employed for the great space of twenty years the oppressed Egyptians, a proof, as has been observed by M. Voltaire, of their enslaved state at the period of its erection; and thus having explored them, did we return astonished at the amazing perseverance and zeal there

stamped to the honour of men anxious to benefit society by satisfying the praiseworthy curiosity of enlightened minds.

The French, when here, calculated the number of cubic feet of solid stone contained in the great Pyramid of Cheops, and by their estimate considered it contained a sufficiency for the building of a wall of four hundred miles in extent, three feet in height, and five inches in thickness—a curious calculation, serving, perhaps, as a slight token of their vastness to those who may not have contemplated them. Herodotus mentions that upon the exterior was engraved the sum expended on radishes, onions, and garlic for the benefit of the artificers, being no less a sum than 1,600 talents, which, if he intends Attic talents, would make the gross sum to amount to 428,800*l.* English money, the Attic talent being equivalent to 193*l.* 15*s.* of our money; and this vast sum may be admitted, perhaps, if Pliny's assertion be correct, that 366,000 men were employed twenty years in erecting this Pyramid. The different admeasurements taken of the Pyramid of Cheops may be found in Savary's "Letters," and in many books of travels. The wide difference to be observed in these estimates, is accounted for, partly by the nature of the ground around the base, and (as regards the ancient admeasurements) by the uncertainty as to the value of the measures used. Sir Gardner Wilkinson also took the admeasurement of this

Pyramid, and by his method partially overcame the former of these difficulties attending this undertaking, by ascending to the tier of stones above the level and encumbrance of the mound of earth in the centre of the face, and measuring along that uninterrupted horizontal line, then letting fall a perpendicular to the base, in order to ascertain, as he tells us, the additional portion at each corner, and completing the admeasurement by adding the bases of those two right angles, making the total of the present face 732 feet, and considering the total length, when entire, to have been 755 or 756 feet; thus rendering his measurement of its actual face at present to correspond very nearly with that of Mr. Lane, who makes it 733 feet; and of those mentioned in the above referred to tables, he borders nearest on Prosper. Alpinus in the supposed entire length. Whether these monuments, were originally intended to hand down to posterity by means of the hieroglyphics engraven on them, the history of those who raised them; whether they were intended for observatories from whence to hold converse with the heavens; or whether they formed the granaries in which the discreet and wise Joseph laid up food "for a store to the land against the seven years of famine,—that the land perish not for famine;" or were intended merely as eternal monuments to the proud rulers of Egypt; will probably be never satisfactorily ascertained. Stupendous they are; and well do they merit the attention bestowed

on them, age after age, from the remotest period, by writer after writer, until their numbers have become multitudes, eager to venture their opinions of these mightiest works that ever sprung up beneath the hand of man, to record to succeeding ages his vanity. After visiting the sphinx, so often described, the sand from the base of which had been lately in part cleared away by Dr. Lepsius, but was fast drifting up again, we decamped, and proceeded on our journey to Saccara, keeping along the border of the cultivation, the verdant valley of the Nile lying on our left, and on our right the more elevated desert. Here and there a spot was very gay with the bright blue flowers of a small and elegant iris. The thick-kneed plover, or stone curlew, inhabits the border of the desert here, hiding itself amidst the scattered knolls of grass and heath where the vegetation gradually dies away in sand. I had recognized its wild note during the preceding evening, and to-day sprung one or two. Near the village of *Abousir*, or *Busiris*, we found a sheet of water of some magnitude, where there were many wild fowl of different species; and here we shot two or three brace of the common English large snipe, and also several specimens of the lesser dotterel, of which there were great numbers flying about in large shoals, mingled with the sea-snipe, or purre. Numbers of teel were also wheeling about over the water, of which a brace made no bad addition

to our larder. We sought for the papyrus, but it did not appear to grow there, as one would suppose it might, the water being stagnant and shallow at the edges, thus rendering it a favourable locality for this peculiar plant. According to the Roman naturalist, Pliny, the many uses for which this plant was adapted rendered it indeed a valuable production; not only was it used for ornamenting the temples and for crowning honourable men, but it formed also ropes and caulking for ships, and even vessels themselves were made of it; Bruce mentions Abyssinian boats formed of it; a piece of acacia tree being placed to serve as a keel; these plants, sewed together, are joined to it, then gathered up at stem and stern, and fastened off. It was also chewed and eaten, and the lower parts made into cups and other such-like articles; but that which has won it more renown than all its other properties, is the fitness of its substance for answering the purpose of paper, the process of preparing it for which use is thus mentioned by the above traveller, deducing it from Pliny's Natural History—"The thick part of the stalk being cut in half, the pellicle between the pith and the bark, or perhaps the two pellicles, were stripped off and divided by an iron instrument, which probably was sharp-pointed, but did not cut at the edges. This was squared at the sides, so as to be like a riband, then laid upon a smooth table

or dresser, after being cut in the length that it was required the leaf should be. These strips or ribands of papyrus were lapped over each other by a very thin border, and then pieces of the same kind were laid transversely, the length of these adding to the breadth of the first; after this a weight was placed upon them while moist, which compressed them, and so they were suffered to dry in the sun." That this substance would last for a great period is proved by Bruce, who was in possession of a manuscript, the leaves of which were formed of papyrus, and which he conjectures to be nearly three times the age of the books of Numa, mentioned by Pliny as being eight hundred and thirty years old when found. Leaving this piece of water, Abousir lay upon our left, shrouded in palm-trees, whilst its Pyramids were upon our right, at some slight distance, on the elevated plain called the "Plain of the Mummies." The Pyramids of Saccara, or Abousir, are very striking, from their number as well as their irregular formation; there are not less than eighteen or nineteen, covering a space of three or four leagues; some towering aloft; some mouldering heaps; some constructed of brick, and others of stone. Champollion considers the brick Pyramids of more ancient date than those of stone; and the largest one at Saccara, which is about three hundred and fifty feet in height, he supposes to have weathered the revolu-

tions of seven thousand years at least; but this is doubtless a very exaggerated estimate, for according to the best received rectification of Egyptian chronology, the building of the earliest Pyramid is supposed to have taken place under Apachnes, the third king of the Shephard dynasty, B.C. 2095; and the era of the construction of the Dashour brick Pyramid, upon which Herodotus found the curious inscription, "Do not compare me with the Pyramids of stone, for I excel them as much as Jupiter excels the other gods; for those who built me thrust poles into a lake, and collecting the mud which adhered to them, they made bricks of it, and thus they constructed me," is placed at B.C. 815.

The appearance of the large Pyramid of Saccara is very remarkable, it being built with four vast retreating stages only; and some of the others there are very peculiar in structure and shape. Abd Allatif mentions, that in Abousir he saw caves constructed with much art, in which were innumerable skeletons of dogs, bulls, cats, &c., and observes that he never met with a horse, ass, or camel preserved in this way: the old men of the village told him "that in all their researches they had failed of finding any of these animals;" which is indeed singular, as one might suppose that if any animals deserved veneration it would be those of such inestimable use, and not the inferior kind. Yet the camel, the most valued

of their treasures, is never found engraved amongst their hieroglyphics, I think. The conservating properties of honey were here proved to the above traveller; for, says he, "a person of credit informed me, that being once occupied, with others, in search of treasures, in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids, they found a pitcher closely sealed; on opening which, and finding honey, they ate of it. One of them remarked a hair that stuck to his finger; he drew it towards him, and a small infant appeared, the whole of the limbs of which still adhered to each other, and the body of which still seemed to preserve its usual freshness; it was decorated with some jewels and rich ornaments." "Hoc juvat et melli est!" doubtless burst from his lips when he found what he had been devouring. We did not visit the Pyramids at this time, but followed our mules, which had left us far in the rear during our delay whilst shooting, neither did we overtake them again before arriving near the Pyramids of Saccara, where, after riding about a long time hunting for the spot of encampment, we at last discovered our tents pitched beneath a ledge of rock facing nearly due east, looking over the valley of the Nile, with its eastern boundary of Jebel Mokattam, rugged and sterile, frowning over the verdant scene. At the northern extremity of this range we could distinguish the minarets of Cairo; immediately beneath us was a strip of barren sand, and betwixt it and the cultivated

land a large tract of water, left, probably, by the inundation, and whereon we saw two or three pelicans disporting themselves. Neither were we now in solitude, for upon this spot was encamped the scientific party sent out by the Prussian Government, headed by Dr. Lepsius, to add, by fresh discoveries, to the chronological and historical information relative to Egypt; and by late reports of their progress, it seems probable that their object may be in some degree attained. To one of the party, Mr. Bonomi, we had a letter from our Consul at Cairo; this gentleman is well known for the great insight he has obtained of Oriental life. We unwittingly committed a breach of courtesy before dismounting at our tent, by riding amongst the tents of this party, to the imminent danger of striking the ropes, but our ignorance of tenting etiquette, and the difficult access to our own encampment by any other road, was our excuse. There is a good deal of Nomadic etiquette to be acquired by custom. Thus, before visiting a neighbour's tent, you should send a forerunner to announce your intention to him, and upon entering the tent, the slippers should be thrown off and left at the door, where there should be a mat for you to place them on; when seated, the proprietor, if he wishes to be thought polite, claps his hands, and immediately you will find yourself inhaling the perfume of Ladikia or

Tombac, whilst a cup of fine Mocha invites you by its fragrance to sip it.

Taking my gun in the evening, I strolled down to the piece of water below the encampment, in order to obtain a shot, if possible, at a pelican, but failed; neither could I get within shot of any of the thousand wild ducks which rose in circling clouds, with a whirring clamour quite sufficient to warn all pelicans for many miles round that an enemy was on the move. Fearing that fever might "exert her dreadful empire here," I left the pestiferous marsh, and returning towards the tent, disturbed a large bird, which I believe to have been a specimen of that noble owl known as the "eagle owl," but although I pursued it, and at one time was within shot, yet from the imperfect light, and the colour of its plumage assimilating very strongly with the rock on which it sat, it escaped me. After retiring to rest, one of the Egyptian plovers, before referred to as having a very disagreeable note, came, and settling on the sand near the tent, kept up its monotonous cry as if in the utmost distress, finding which beyond endurance, sallying forth, I fired with the most murderous intention in the direction I supposed it to be, but this only caused it to shift its situation and increase its cry.

The following morning after our arrival we visited the neighbouring Pyramids, some of which are indeed, rather, shapeless heaps, at present,

than Pyramids, but others more perfect. For a minute description of these structures, let me refer the curious to Pococke, who measured and examined several of them. From their decayed state, and from the circumstance that some of them are composed of unburnt bricks, it has been inferred that they are even of remoter antiquity than those of Djiza. One of those nearest our encampment I entered, for though fully satisfied by the experience I had gained at Djiza, that the exploring of Pyramids is no jest, yet as this one had just been re-opened by Dr. Lepsius after the orifice had been choked up with sand for some considerable period, (for though it has been explored before, the sand so soon drifts in that it is necessary again to expend considerable labour in clearing the way for any after explorer,) and I had thus an opportunity of seeing the interior, which many other travellers have not been enabled to do, I deemed it worthy the labour. Descending a shaft of a few feet in depth, accompanied only by one Arab, (my companion not deeming the toil likely to be repaid,) we placed ourselves flat on our faces, and by the movement of our bodies, worked through the soft sand which even now again almost choked the exceedingly straightened entrance; then inclining to the left, where the passage is of rather larger dimensions, proceeded straightforwards for some considerable distance, after which we took a

branch passage to the right, and passed a deep hole, which seemed to lead to a chamber below, judging by the sound emitted when a stone was rolled in. Still pursuing this passage, we found it to terminate in a tremendous abyss, seemingly of very great depth and size, the proper mouth of which was far above where we were, being, as it were, the continuation of a huge shaft, sunk from somewhere towards the summit of the building; what the height might be it was impossible to judge by the light of our candles. Returning by the same passage, which varied from six, to two feet in height, we regained that we had first entered, and passing down some rough hewn steps, turned short to the right again for about twenty yards, where was a small shaft running up through the roof of the passage, passing beneath which we descended four steps, rough hewn as the others, and then entered a passage running parallel with the first, leaving which we descended more steps, and turning again to the right, went down a steep descent, then creeping along a very low passage for about twenty yards, found an extensive chamber of excessive loftiness, for firing a quantity of dead cane which lay there, I could yet distinguish no semblance of a roof. The floor of this chamber was a chaos of huge blocks of stone, amongst which, about the centre, was what appeared to be the lid of a sarcophagus, standing edgeways,

being supported in that position by the blocks around it. Willingly would I have explored more passages after leaving this, but my Arab refused with the most dogged obstinacy, in spite of my promises of "backsheesh," and, moreover, in spite of my showing him, in the heat of debate, the butt-end of my pistol, for he had proved all along an annoying fellow, several times hesitating about proceeding. After this dispute, I thought it quite as well to get out, lest he should desert me in these gloomy regions. Indeed I looked forward to beholding again the azure vault of heaven with some impatience, being faint with exertion, bathed in excessive perspiration, and smothered with dust, as before at Djiza: the passages here explored were far more laborious to pursue than the generality of those at Djiza, the main ones of which are quite noble halls. Rejoining my companion, we visited the catacomb containing the mummied ibises. Creeping through a hole under a rock, the aperture being only a foot and a-half high above the sand, we entered a chamber of some twenty feet by eleven, in the centre of which was a shaft like a small square well, about twenty-five feet in depth, which we descended by placing the hands and feet in little niches cut in the sides: having gone down first, I had the benefit of all the sand and rubbish kicked on my head by my companion in his descent, which made me inwardly resolve that for the future in

places of this nature, I would yield the palm of adventure to another, and be satisfied to follow in the wake. At the bottom our Arab stooped down and was gone; a very small orifice had received him. I next did the same, and plunged forward; indeed a good deal of plunging was necessary to get on at all, and if the Arab had not seized my legs, I might perhaps have plunged to no purpose but suffocation. My companion tried to follow, but after much inveterate struggling shouted that he was smothering, and retreated; but at a second attempt, and undergoing the same process of having his legs pulled, found himself beside me in a long gallery of some four feet high, on an average, but in some parts not more than three, and at others five. Here were strewed fragments of earthen pots, in all directions, making it very painful to proceed where it was necessary to go on hand and knees. Passing on, we found immense heaps of red baked clay pots, sugar loaf shape, some of which we broke, here and there finding one which contained a bird in great perfection, showing the wing feathers and beak uninjured; but the generality of them were full of black and pungent dust. Stooping over my candle whilst breaking some of the pots, the long tassel of my Fez cap caught fire, emitting a momentary blaze, then leaving me in darkness; but the Arabs being with other lights in a neighbouring passage, soon answered my shouts. There seems to be in this

catacomb no remains of any other animal than the ibis as far as we could find; and from the remains of this bird I should have supposed it wholly of a glossy black plumage, though it is considered to be the same as the "*abou hannes*" of Ethiopia, described by Bruce, the greatest part of the plumage of which is white. Speaking of the rarity of the "abou hannes," or sacred ibis, in Egypt at this day, that writer accounts for it by the fallen state of the country since that period when it extended even into the Libyan Desert, and lakes formed by the early kings, and plantations by her inhabitants, invited both the ibis, and its prey the serpent; but when verdure became confined to its present narrow space, and man no longer laboured to keep up the canals and the little brooks, the ibis sought another and more propitious home, retiring to the pools of Ethiopia. Bruce's ibis must be the second species mentioned by Herodotus, who gives a minute description of this the most common sort, which tallies strongly with that traveller's description of the "abou hannes," as do also the figures of the ibis copied by Calmet from the ancient Egyptian pictures recovered from the ruins of Herculaneum. Both Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus, inform us that to kill an ibis was death, or, if it happened accidentally, the latter says, a heavy fine was the penalty. Causing the Arabs to bring several of the vases containing these birds above ground, we chose some of the soundest looking, and afterwards

transmitted one to England, but the air acting upon the mummy from the breaking of the pot has caused it to pulverize greatly, leaving many bones exposed, as well as elucidating its food, which in this one seems chiefly to have consisted of snails, of which one large shell about the size of our helix hortensis is almost perfect. Returning to the tents we passed over an extensive heap of mummied cats, the ground being strewed with fragments of thousands of these sacred animals, but none entire. This scene brought to my mind Hume's remark, that taking into consideration the rapid propagation of cats, that even from one couple of these animals "it would in twenty years time have been easier to find in Egypt a god, than a man." As we trampled these thousands of divinities beneath our feet, I was, however, almost led to doubt his supposition, "That this wise nation, the most celebrated in antiquity for prudence and policy, reserved all their worship for the full grown divinities, and used the freedom to drown the holy spawn, or little sucking gods, without any scruple or remorse." Such a field of dead gods' bones never did I see. In whatever family a cat by accident happens to die, says Herodotus, "every individual cuts off his eyebrows; but on the death of a dog, they shave their heads and every part of their bodies." We had a visit from Mr. Bonomi, and another gentleman of the party, in the evening, and enjoyed with their con-

versation our pipes and coffee. It was a most brilliant night: the heavens,

> "Adorned with thousand lamps of burning light,
> And with ten thousand gems of shining gold."

The moon rising from behind Mokattam's mountain range, threw her soft and silvering beams over the winding Nile, and the groves of palms studding its green vale; but the air was extremely chill, and so heavy a dew falling, that before morning our garments suspended inside of the tent were saturated with moisture.

CHAPTER XV.

FAYOUM EXCURSION.

Journey to Tamieh.—Dispute with attendants.—Village Sheikh.—Nitrous exudations.—Encamp at Tamieh.—Egyptian vulture.—Fresh contention with attendants.—Leave for *Birket el Keroun*.—Ancient ruins.—Encampment.—Want of water.

We explored the excavation made by Colonel Howard Vyse, in August, 1839, in the west face of one of the Pyramids, during the time we were at Saccara. Seventeen rough hewn columns support the roof of a long chamber, terminating in a deep chasm; within this chamber was a great quantity of mummy cloth, with many fragments of mummies covered with the preservative pitch. In one corner stood a young lady mummy, to whom offering my arm, I led her forth with the intention of transmitting her to England; but creeping out of the confined entrance her head unfortunately came in rude contact with the side wall and rolled off, upon which my gallantry led me to carry her back to her former position, where, putting her head on again as neatly as I could, we parted.

Upon the morning of the 16th of February,

leaving our encampment at Saccara, we turned our faces due south, being intent upon arriving that night at the village of Tamieh, which lies six miles east of the Birket el Keroun, considered by some as occupying part of the site of the ancient lake Mœris. This village is a long day's journey south-west of Saccara; so that it was expedient to be on the way at an early hour:

> " Gia l'aura messaggiera erasi desta
> Ad annunziar che se ne vien l'aurora:
> Ella intanto s' adorna, e l'aurea testa
> De rose colte in paradiso infiora."

Crossing the narrow strip of sand below our tents, we filed along the margin of the cultivated lands, winding on through groves of palm mingled with Mimosa nilotica or Acacia vera, from the stem of which shrub exudes the frankincense. Its light and beautiful foliage shadowing our path, preserved a green and refreshing carpet of turf beneath its boughs, spangled with flowers bright and gay. The pods containing the seeds of this shrub are very curious, leading us to bring away some for specimens. The finest gum arabic, or frankincense, is, however, gathered from a variety of this tree in the more southern provinces of Egypt, where may be found large forests composed wholly of it.*

* Ignatius Pallme, in his "Travels in Kordofan," says, "The harvest is modified by the annual fall of rain, for if it rain much the trees sweat the more. The gum exudes from the bark of the stem and large branches nearly in the same manner as the resinous

Leaving the pyramids south of Saccara on our right —many of them mere misshapen heaps of sand, mud-brick, or stone—we pursued our course, at about the rate of three miles an hour: but every now and then we were detained by something befalling the baggage, or other little matter, and one terrible crash informed us that all our crockery was demolished; for Elias not having duly attended to the loading of the mules, a portion of the baggage had fallen to the ground. Traversing several Egyptian villages redolent with dogs, pigeons, and filth, where girls and boys of thirteen or fourteen years of age were perfectly unclothed, and many of the men and women almost so, we arrived at a little pool of water, upon which I shot two "shield drakes," and a common duck from a large flight. The former beautiful bird I did not meet with afterwards in this country. Turning westward, we arrived at a little village bearing the name of "Jebelah," (as nearly as I could catch it from one of the Arabs,) where we lunched beneath a vast sycamore fig, overspreading a large mud tomb, with a whitened dome, erected to some santon whose devout life had earned him the title of "Welée," or holy man; and death,—this whitewashed dome of mud. A troop of veiled female

exudation from the cherry-trees of Europe." According to this traveller, the gathering of the gum is made in the winter months, and commences soon after the rainy season (which ends in October) is over.

forms drew nigh this sanctuary with slow and solemn step, and entering the little court leading to the shrine within, conjured in low and murmured prayers the soul of him to whom it was reared. Calling on God, the great and only God, and Mahomed his Prophet, through the medium of their saint, to hear their wailings, and ease the burthen of their sorrowing souls, they bowed and kissed the dust, then cried again, "O God, the Lord of all creatures, hear our prayer! O Mahomed, the Lord of Paradise, assist our cry!"

This village was graced (as nearly all Egyptian villages are) with several of the large mud pigeon-houses, with white turrets; for the dung of these birds is nearly the only manure the Egyptians have for their land, that of the cattle being consumed for fuel, and the soot it is reduced to, used to extract sal-ammonia from: for which reason, the law mentioned by Norden was made, forbidding any man to marry unless he has a dove-house. Our Arabs obstinately refused to proceed further than this point until the arrival of a caravan for Medinet el Fayoum; for they had never been this way before, and talked of Bedouins in the wild desert tract we were on the point of entering. Even Elias spoke as a coward on this head; as if so near the dread Pasha's abode there was the slightest danger of travellers being insulted. No! they have felt too heavily his unsparing hand of late to repeat any offence tending to provoke his scourge again; for visions rise

before them of burnt villages, ripped up squaws, and slaughtered children. We laughed at Elias for his fears, which made him forthwith draw his sabre, and rush about in a frantic manner to force the muleteers to repack the baggage, some of which we had taken off to obtain some bread. Nothing, however, would pacify them, except getting the shiekh of the village to accompany us, who indeed was highly necessary for a guide, as it proved. With his Bedouin mantle, long gun, and rough-made wooden-sheathed sword, the man in authority dashed forward. Bending in his high-peaked saddle, in order to give full force to his heel administering meantime cruel blows with the corner of his great iron shovel-stirrups on the ribs of his white angular-limbed horse, then suddenly pulling him up on his haunches with a dead check, he claimed admiration. Passing through more palm and acacia groves, swarming with pigeons, doves, and the beautiful-crested hoopoe, soon we arrived upon the desert sand. Masses of tamarisk, in full bloom, grew here and there for a short space; then the surface became undulating and perfectly sterile. Keeping S.S.W., onward we plodded, our donkeys already shewing us that we were wrong in forcing them to perform the part of camels. Our sheikh continually asking for backsheesh, to keep the man of war quiet we gave him tobacco. He seemed to be no great traveller; for he had never been to

Cairo, though so short a distance off from his native village; neither had he, as appeared upon our questioning him, ever heard of any piece of water near Tamieh, except the branch canal of "Joseph's River," the "Bahr-Yousef," assigned to Mœris, or Amenophis the Third, who reigned about 1327 B.C., being the seventeenth king of the fourth dynasty, and one of the wisest of Egypt's rulers. Amongst other great works, he constructed, as some suppose, that tank, the vast circumference of which embraced, according to the "Patriarch of history," 3,600 stadia, or 450 miles English; a gigantic reservoir designed to receive, by means of the above canal, with its numerous tributaries and branches, the superabundant waters of the generous Nile, and thus presenting in its depths a noble receptacle for fish, whilst its glassy surface rippled in the wake of many a papyrus ship, gliding from point to point, collecting and distributing the fruit of its teeming shores. Such was the Lake Mœris, if we may rely on ancient accounts of this inland sea. Taking out my watch, our guide requested me to let him look at it, and, upon my permitting him to do so, asked of Elias an explanation of its use, and arrived at the conclusion that it was inhabited by a spirit; for the total ignorance of the lower class of Egyptians concerning works of mechanism is quite absurd. The lamented Mr. Lloyd informed me at Cairo, that one day when out shooting, not being able to find some birds that he was in pursuit of, his Arab

attendant expressed great astonishment that he could not discover them by means of a pocket compass, which he had often seen him use.

Passing near a large piece of water, surrounded with acacias, we had about half an hour's campaign against the shoals of wild ducks and waders haunting it, and success attending us, we fared luxuriously on wild fowl. Traversing a considerable wady,* we ascended the opposite side, and crossing a plain of sand, arrived at what I could not but suppose to be the ancient bed of a river; a great space being completely covered with loose jasper flints, and large rolled stones, intermingled with petrified wood, resembling that found in the neighbourhood of Cairo, except in the size of the pieces, which here were all of small dimensions, and both the stones and the fragments of fossil wood having evidently been rounded by the action of water. The breadth of this bed, which ran north-west and south-east, was about half a mile or not quite so much. In the middle of this apparently dry water-course, are what one might almost

* The depressions in the desert sands are denominated *wady*, a word literally denoting *a water bed;* but many of these depressions present wide sweeps of some miles in extent, a very small portion of which may be occupied by waters in the rainy season. Others again are mere narrow sinks in the surface, at the bottom of which the traveller will find in the dry season scorched but not lifeless shrubs and plants, speaking to him of the torrent which flows there during the rains, and so saturates the sands as to preserve vegetable life till the wet season again arrives.

suppose to have been islands, now high mounds of sand based on sand rock, exposed several feet above the level of the course, and presenting precipitous sides, whilst the same appearance might be observed along the boundaries of this bed, particularly the western boundary. The sheikh said he had heard these mounds were raised where persons had been buried, but this was a ridiculous supposition, as there was nothing in any way artificial about them; nothing at all to give them the character of tumuli—No! a river probably once flowed here, bearing with its flood luxuriant vegetation, "sending out its little rivers unto all the trees of the field;" another instance of the fulfilment of the denunciation, "I will make the rivers dry, and I will make the land waste." About some rocky little hills in the neighbourhood were several old ravens enjoying the solitude.*

It was now getting late in the day, and our donkeys were terribly exhausted, and fatigued us much in forcing them on, making us almost despair of reaching Tamieh that night. About five o'clock we left to our right what we at first deemed sheets of water,

* Often did we, in our after travels through the most retired parts of the desert, hail, as old friends, the raven and the common crow, inhabiting districts where the sole sustenance offered them consists of serpents, lizards, and beetles, with now and then a glorious *bon bouche* in the form of a dead pilgrim or camel. These birds, in spite of their never being disturbed by any living creatures, did not seem one wit free from that waryness and cunning which nearly all other birds, even to the hawk, seem to lay aside in countries where they are not annoyed by man.

but it proved to be a nitrous exudation, and salt to the taste. The process by which nature forms this deposit, has never been satisfactorily proved by philosophers; but it is deemed that it cannot be produced in the air, as some have asserted, because it is known that no salt is capable of being diffused in air except *volatile alkali.* It is to this saline substance, that Egypt is said to owe, in great measure, its fertility, and the astonishingly quick vegetation* of some of its plants. Sir Gardner Wilkinson, speaking of the ancient Egyptians, says, "Sometimes, as we are informed by Pliny, they used a dressing of nitrous soil, which was spread over the surface, a custom continued to the present day; but this was confined to certain crops, and principally to those reared late in the year; the fertilizing properties of the alluvial deposit answering all the purposes of the richest manure." Towards evening a large string of wild geese passed near us, flying low over the sand and settling about these nitrous spots; perhaps taking them for water, as we did. Pleasant would have been the opportunity to have sacrificed one to the gods; to have hashed one up with cakes and wine, a side-dish for Osiris, as of old; for then could we have struck our flesh-hooks into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot, and seized the sacerdotal portion. But it was dusk, and they were wary.

* Les melons et les concombres grossissent, pour ainsi dire, à vue d'œil : en vingt quatre heurs ils gagnent vingt quatre pouces de volume.—MALTE-BRUN.

Ten o'clock was already past, and we were still arduously engaged in thrashing our poor donkeys in darkness, when presently appeared the sheen of water. It proved to be part of the canal just above Tamieh. Wild fowl whistled by our heads as we roused them from their supper on the surface of the flood. About eleven p.m. we were standing near the southern gate of Tamieh, surrounded on all sides by defiling dogs, barking in furious anger at so unexpected an irruption upon them, at that unseasonable hour of the night. A very unpleasant odour corrupted the atmosphere, which we could not at the time exactly account for; but striking a light we pitched the tents, and getting a scanty mouthful of maccaroni for supper, and some tea, our appetites a little allayed, and somewhat refreshed, we retired to our mats. Our miserable donkeys threw themselves on the ground the moment we took their saddles off, and lay stretched out as in utter despair of ever again beholding Cairo, the City of Delight. I tried with my own hands to persuade them to eat a little green meat, but it was useless: twelve hours and a-half journey, with little cessation, had completely cast them down. Our old enemy the Nile plover came, and taking up its position in our vicinity, greeted our arrival with its tiring note. Fancying I saw an object move in the direction of the noise, I fired, when up started one of our Arabs, who was sleeping upon the ground near at hand, but fortunately

I had shot over him, so that finding himself uninjured he quietly courted slumber again. Curiously enough, I had killed the plover, dark as it was, and hearing it fluttering, I sought for it, thereby running the greatest danger of sprawling over some dead buffaloes, which at once accounted for the unpleasant state of the air. Fatigue procured us sweet sleep, and the plover materially assisted our next day's breakfast, though wonderfully hard and tough, and its flesh of an unpleasant black colour.

Waking early on that morning, Feb. 17th, we found ourselves stationed between plague and fever, dead buffaloes opposite our tent door, and marsh and water behind us. Tamieh is surrounded with mud walls, from which we were about twenty yards distance. I obtained near the tent, attracted by the dead carcases, a specimen of the great black and white Egyptian vulture. It was high in air, and fell heavily nearly on my head. On my going to pick it up, seemingly quite dead, it grasped my hand with a too affectionate gripe, a last dying embrace, leaving a deep impression; for it forced its talons into my flesh. This beautiful bird had a fine crest, and measured from the tip of one wing to that of the other about four feet and a-half.* Whilst the mules were packing, we wan-

* This bird (*vultur percnopterus*) was regarded by the ancient Egyptians as the emblem of parental affection, it being related of it that for a hundred and twenty days it watches its young, and

dered up the banks of the *Bahr Bella Ma*, for such is the name of the great canal at Tamieh, a tributary outlet from the great "*Bahr Yousef*," cut by Mœris, which, after running about 120 miles, presents to Medinet el Fayoum its freight of fattening water from the Nile, and branching forth, feeds the Valley of Fayoum. Though by some this great work is supposed to derive its name from the Patriarch Joseph, of blessed memory, it is more properly considered to have been so christened by its repairer, the Sultan Joseph Saladin, who cut the well in the citadel of Cairo, as I have before related. Among the birds I observed about this canal, were the buff-backed heron, the shag, the pelican, the sterna nilotica, or Egyptian tern, the common large tern, and numerous waders, amongst them the avoset, and the black-winged long-shanks. Both the small and common ring dotterel were also numerous in the little pools about the marshy banks, together with

when food fails, tears the fleshy parts of its thighs, that they may preserve life with its blood. It was also sacred to Isis, whose statue was ornamented with its feathers. Fablo moreover states that the female of this bird conceives from the south wind, no males of the species being found. Bruce contends that this is the bird referred to in the original of Exodus xix. 4: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." But it appears from Dr. Russell's statement that the word "*rachama*," a *vulture*, is not used in that passage, as Bruce imagined it to be, but the word "*nisrim*, the plural form of *nisr*," literally rendered in our translation, *eagles*.

the green sand-piper. Gulls, grebes, geese, and ducks were also there by thousands. This canal is of a very great breadth near Tamieh; so that my friend going on one side in search of sport and I on the other, we were often not within hail. Moreover, there are here and there marshes and pools, which forced us to make large circuits. After wandering a mile or two, I shot a large bird, which falling in the water, I feared to endeavour to obtain it, on account of the marshy-looking bottom of the canal, and so passed on; but presently, looking back, I saw a gaunt, naked Bedouin issue forth from some bushes near where I had fired, quietly plunge into the water, and secure my game. After waiting till he had fairly landed and disappeared in his lair again, I returned to demand it, and found the gentleman squatting on his hams, with his loose mantle on, and a long matchlock gun by his side, but, to my surprise, not a vestige of the bird at hand. Saluting him to the best of my ability as he started on his feet, he commenced talking very vociferously: but finding that it was all in vain, as I made signs that he spoke an unknown tongue, he ceased, and seemed to wonder what I desired, until, pointing my gun in the air, as if aiming at a bird, and making a mysterious sound to represent the report, I forthwith commenced turning up the sand in a dubious manner with the muzzle of my piece, and then, looking at him with an air of surprise, opened my

mouth and eyes very wide and pointed down my throat. The interpretation which I wished him to put on this complicated manœuvring was nothing more than "What have you done with the bird I shot? have you buried it, or swallowed it whole?" Shewing his white teeth, he laughed aloud, and ejaculating "Tieb! Tieb!" threw off his mantle, and there was my game, an abominable cormorant, to one foot of which he had attached a twig of willow, then drawing the two ends of the wisp together had fastened it round his naked body. Making signs to him that I would not rob him of his treasure, and giving him a little powder out of my flask, we parted most excellent friends, but not till he had examined my gun with great delight, (I taking care, meanwhile, to have his in my hand, lest he should, in his raptures, run off,) and made me explain to him by signs the meaning of the two hammers, the caps, &c. He then pressed me to go with him, making signs that he could show me plenty of game, but as it was time to return to our tents, I was obliged to refuse his offer.

I cannot imagine a greater treat for an ornithologist, than a trip to this Valley of Fayoum. It appeared to me, from what I saw of it, to be a grand *depôt* for many birds that rank as British, but birds of which the naturalist in Britain may covet specimens and never obtain. In this retired spot, where the scarcity of ammunition and the peculiar feelings of the natives cause them seldom

to be disturbed, they find pools and canals, the mud of which swarms with their favourite food, whilst the choking beds of sedge and weed offer excellent breeding places where to rear their young in safety. Returning to our party, we found that the mules were not prepared for proceeding, and that some of the muleteers were not to be found; whilst a crowd of fellahs of the village apparently were striving which could talk the loudest. It proved that two of our men had concealed themselves, vowing they would go no farther on what they deemed a wild-goose chase; for Elias said he could find out from no one that such a lake as the "Birket el Keroun" was in existence: but making him cross-question some of those present, we at last obtained the information that there was a lake four days' journey off, which they called by some other name. Our muleteers then cried out that they had no fodder, and could not get any in the village for the beasts. However, we asserted our determination to proceed, and to steer by map and compass until we arrived at the lake, which we knew it was perfectly impossible could be more than a day's journey, at most, to the west. So our wily and troublesome Albanian went into the village with his hippopotamus hide whip, and soon re-appeared, driving the absentees before him. Attended by much grumbling and growling from all parties, we bade adieu to Tamieh, its dead oxen and barking dogs, but it was nearly three

o'clock p.m. before the march was commenced, on account of this obstinate behaviour of our train.

We now proceeded a little east by north along the border of a cultivated district lying on our left, whilst on the right was barren sand and gravel to the very horizon. A *wely*, or sheikh's tomb, (as the tombs of Mahomedan saints are usually called,) with one tall palm tree overshadowing it, stood about half a mile from the outskirts of Tamieh, a short distance to our left. About half an hour from the village we turned nearly due west; cultivation still on our left, but northward and behind us desert. Soon after taking this direction, we passed a little pool of water, where it afterwards proved we should have taken in a supply, but we neglected to do so. The low sandy hills of *Keroun*, forming the northern boundary of the Valley of Fayoum, were now on our right, whilst the minarets of Tamieh, with a few scattered palms, vying with them in height and gracefulness, were to be seen due left of our position, or south. About an hour and a-half from Tamieh we observed a flat exposed face of stone, which appeared to me to be the mere rising of the strata forming the rocky foundation of the desert, exposed by the winds having blown the sandy surface off at this spot. Our sheikh guide talked of a town once standing here, but there was not the remotest appearance to lead to that supposition. He also stated that the Bedouins dug mill-

stones here, to take to Cairo: but that seemed to me equally incredible, as the stone was not at all adapted for that purpose, being very liable to flake away. However, hot sun and wind might, perhaps, have contributed to give this character to the naked surface. A flock of the desert partridge rose near us. These birds assimilate so much in colour with the soil, that, although, a very short distance off it was difficult to distinguish them when on the ground from the surrounding stones and sand, for thus has the Creator ordained in his wisdom that every animal be adapted to the situation allotted it for its habitation. Corn, beans, and the vegetable called "Arab potato," were the chief crops on the cultivated land. This potato is, I believe, the "*colocasium*," or "*arum colocasia*" of Hasselquist. It is a large coarse-leaved plant. Modern Egyptians, as did the ancients, live very much on a vegetable diet. Coming to a field of green corn, our men rushed into it, and brought away a great load each for our beasts. Moreover, we ourselves rode in, and allowed them to graze for some time with the greatest freedom, even as if, instead of being miserable asses, defiled by bestriding Ghiours, they had been victims devoted for sacrifice at the tomb of some favourite patron saint, which when once dedicated to that end are allowed to roam and pasture where they will; and happy is the Egyptian farmer who sees one of these holy beasts devouring his finest corn, or rolling in his noblest

crop of lupins after having eaten its fill: what would a British farmer say to this? Drawing near to a low range of sand hills on the right, we beheld huge blocks of stone scattered about the summit; whereupon dismounting, we ascended, and found there immense heaps of red pottery, plain and ribbed, intermingled with fragments of glass, some white and some coloured, together with great quantities of the blue pottery so universally found upon these ancient sites in Egypt. Here also was strewed much of a bright red earth, which I should imagine had passed through fire, but yet was not at all similar to burnt clay for brick, but rather seemed of a stony nature, which the action of fire had rendered brittle. A species of fluor spar, in small pieces, shewing the rays of light as in a prism, and coming off in flakes, like talc, also attracted our attention. Many of the blocks of stone were of a peculiar form, being small at the base, but bulging out with rounded sides, and flat topped; their size was generally very vast. Along the ridge of this elevated ground, extended a range of detached masses for at least half a mile, in a direction east and west. That a city once stood here is evident, but we could not find in our map an ancient site marked at this spot, unless it is that of *Bacchis*. And if so, in the maps it is placed too far west, and too near the borders of the present Lake Birket el Keroun, the waters of which, though visible from hence, are two hours'

distant. We had gone somewhat too far north of our proper course from Tamieh to the Birket el Keroun, which caused us to stumble on these remains, marking the site of one of those cities which, now overwhelmed by the decrease of civilization, and the consequent invasion of the Libyan sands, once stood proudly overlooking the most fertile vale in Egypt, where, and where alone in that country, flourished the olive and the vine; where also fat pastures were revelled in by lowing herds, and watered by broad canals and running rivulets. But now the surrounding scene is almost as desolate and melancholy as her own crumbled walls and towers; the fat kine are dwindled away, the canals and rivulets choked with sand. We encamped about half a mile to the south of this position, pitching our tents on the plain below, amongst low mounds of sand, covered with tamarisk bushes in full flower. The whole of our party pretended to fear Bedouins, of whom we saw one or two about, a short distance off; but how much more did they murmur when, upon examining our water-skins, they were found empty. Abuse was heaped upon us for leading them forth in the wilderness; and then they "fell a lusting" for the cucumbers, and the melons, &c., which they did eat freely in the City of Delight. However, the Sheikh mounting his steed, diligently applied his shovel stirrups to his horse's ribs, and was off in search of a spring or well, whilst we, in order to

allay our hunger, sat us down and inhaled the fragrant weed. In the course of about half an hour our forager returned, and with a rueful countenance delivered himself of the grievous intelligence that the well was dry, which the Bedouins had directed him to; however, after a little melancholy rumination, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and off he dashed again; neither this time did he return empty-handed, but produced, with evident satisfaction and pride, about half a skinful of particularly muddy water. Where he had found this supply we neither knew nor cared, but valued it according to our circumstances. There not being enough to perform ablutions with, I washed my hands, which were covered with gunpowder, with the desert sand, as a prelude to an attack upon a dish of maccaroni, cooked up with the produce of our sporting excursion on the banks of the Bahr Bellama. Many a scientific heart would have fainted at the sight of such a lordly dish of hashed-up feathered varieties; it was indeed a most ornithological repast! Looking to our firearms, and laying them beside our mats, —"because of fear in the night"—we courted sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

FAYOUM EXCURSION.

Nocturnal Gale.—Bedouin Thieves.—Lose our Party.—Birket el Keroun.—Whirlwind.—Arab Encampment.—Senures.—Our Sheikh leaves us.—Partridges.—Leave Senures.—Ancient Remains.—Medinet el Fayoum.

Our rest that night was very much disturbed, our fearful followers having gathered themselves and their jackasses so close around our tent, that every minute one or the other kicked against the ropes, much to our annoyance; neither did the mournful cries of trooping jackalls, as they swiftly passed in the chase, or hovered about the encampment, tend to create sweet dreams. And then, alas! a mysterious sound was heard in the heavens, breaking the stillness of the night: it was the wild wind which, rushing abroad in one fierce blast, swept the surface of the desert, laden with clouds of sand; our tent was down, almost before we could escape from the doorway, the ground giving no hold to the pegs; a circumstance we had noticed, but thought little of when we encamped, as the evening was remarkably calm, and no signs appeared at all of such a pending visitation. All

was now hushed again! it was like the sudden bursting forth of an Alpine torrent, which one precipitated cloud, swelling in its fountains, onward rushes carrying all before it; yet in a few short hours is once more almost lost. Raising our fallen house, and fixing it to the best of our ability with a couple of long ropes for stays, tied to some neighbouring tamarisk bushes, we crept in, and slept until "the glorious sun revealed the golden day:" then rose to bedeck ourselves with raiment full of sand, and wet with heavy dew. The men rose to feed the asses, but declared the Bedouins had robbed us of the stolen fodder, which they had overnight heaped near the tent; but we could not believe a Bedouin would have troubled himself to have done this, as a very short distance off there was plenty of the same growing. We drove the beasts, therefore, to get their breakfast, as they had done their supper, in a field of green standing corn. Leaving our tents pitched with the intention of afterwards returning to them before commencing the day's journey, we took our guns and walked across the plain of sand to the ruined city, we had cursorily examined the day before; that we might take a last look at her desolation. Amongst the sand mounds, (which were merely formed by the drifting surface arrested by the tamarisk bushes,) were numerous tracts of different animals, chiefly jackalls, gazelles, and partridges, but no living thing did we meet with. Arrived once more upon the summit of the

hill where the ruins lay, we turned round before going farther, that we might notice well the direction of our tents, as a landmark to guide us back, but we gazed in vain; neither could we, with the assistance of a most excellent telescope, by any means discover them, until presently sweeping the country round, we beheld a file of asses and other beasts of burthen, proceeding very quietly in full march to the west, and upon examination, the Greek dress of our servant betrayed them. This might have been a very awkward manœuvre of theirs, as far as we were concerned, as, if we had not seen them as we did, we might have wandered about and starved, or prevented prowling wolves or hyænas from being so. Our indignation was therefore proportionably great, as we considered the risk; and rapidly we hurried on westward to overtake them, shouting lustily to no effect, as they were far off, indeed so far that the train looked more like a dark snake winding over the sand than a body of men and noble asses of Cairo. Traversing the plain again below the hill, we noticed large beds of petrified oyster shells, mingled with fossil bones and wood; of the former, I brought away a portion of the vertebræ of some large animal. Fragments of limestone lying about were also full of fossil shells, particularly a large species of screw. We collected several good specimens, but a traveller collects in the morning, and for various reasons casts away before night; so it was with these curiosities,

for the weight and rapid accumulation of such things prohibit their preservation, otherwise we might have collected many beautiful and rare pebbles, fossils, &c., that often attracted our attention, making us long that a magic wish might transport them to a cabinet in England, without the trouble of taking them there. We now saw to our joy our Sheikh in the distance, riding about, evidently seeking us, and, hearing us hailing him, he galloped towards us, mingling tokens of joy at our recovery with sighs of regret at our loss, for our manner did not betoken us very well pleased, as may be supposed; and doubtless he thought his tobacco bag might not be so well filled for the future: however, he was a very good fellow in the main, and we did not accuse him so bitterly as our Greek, whom we lectured in a very emphatic manner, but did not actually put to death upon the spot, as we meditated at one time, if we ever reached him again. No satisfactory explanation regarding this extraordinary movement on the part of master Elias was ever arrived at by us; he having rapidly dwindled in our estimation ever since leaving Cairo, this brought it to a climax, and we regarded him with an eye of suspicion. Plodding on in a western direction over a plain of sand, with scattered masses of tamarisk about five or six feet in the average height, we presently turning a little south of west, passed over a narrow strip of

cultivated land, the aspect of which denoted a war between Bedouins and drifting sand, between Arab potato and tamarisk bushes; and of which encounter it seemed the latter in both cases was getting the best. A waste tract then appeared, covered with knolls of a very coarse kind of matted weed, that I have not met with before or since; part of this track was marshy, and in some places were evident signs of ancient cultivation, as if there had once been channels for water intersecting it. A strip of sand then again intervened. Our Shiekh had never been here before, and did not know at all what point to make for; so we steered straight a-head to the lake, which was visible at some distance, and after passing over an extensive tract of waste like that I have before described, half marsh, and with black soil, capable, if cultivated, of bearing the richest crops, we drew near the margin of the Birket el Karoun. Flat and marshy are the banks at this part of its coast, and covered with a thicket of brushwood, chiefly tamarisk: fine cover for the blackening multitude of wild fowl sporting on its surface. Avosets, and other long and short legged waders, haunted the shore in thousands, whilst here and there floated the huge pelican, or with a hoarse cry extending its vast wings, circled aloft in air. Pococke mentions that he found about the borders of this lake many roots of vines, for the production of which this country once excelled. I sought but

found none at this part. It is as ugly a flood as can well be imagined—flat and muddy are its shores, and salt is its water; as to extent, its present length does not, it is said, exceed thirty miles, and in the widest part it is hardly seven miles across. A range of hills encircles it except on the eastern end, where we now were, which range forms a portion of the northern boundary of the valley of Fayoum. Herodotus gives the ancient circumference of the Lake Mœris three thousand six hundred stadia, or four hundred and fifty miles. Pococke informs us that Diodorus makes it about the same, and Pomponius Mela about five hundred miles. The two former add, that in some parts it was three hundred feet deep; and, says Herodotus, in the centre "there may be seen two Pyramids, each of which is two hundred cubits above and as many beneath the water; upon the summit of each is a colossal statue of marble in a sitting attitude." These monuments of six hundred feet in height were said to be, as the lake in which they stood, the work of Mœris, though, as it has been observed, the name of the lake is perhaps merely a corruption of the word "*merhi* or *medhi*," an appellation even to this day said to be given in India to the pillars or obelisks raised in the middle of the tanks and pools. The fishery carried on in the time of Herodotus furnished the Royal treasury with a talent of silver every day during the six months the water was at the ebb, but as soon as the Nile

began to pour into it, this produce diminished. The revenue thus derived seems to have formed the Egyptian Queens pin-money; finding them in clothes and perfume. I was told at Fayoum that there are a great many fish in this lake of Keroun, but they did not say much in praise of their quality. The common people here, according to Pocöcke, have strong traditions about Keroun, and "say he was a King, and had keys to his treasures that loaded two hundred camels."

Apart from my companions, after a sharp campaign against the wild-fowl, I sat down on the borders of the lake, and munching a piece of dirty Arab bread by way of lunch, struck the spurs into the wild steed "Imagination;" giving her full rein, forth she dashed through the province of Arsinoè, midst fair pastures of the days of Mœris, snuffing the air laden with the perfumes of spring, exhaling from the richest portion of the land of Egypt, the valley of all others the most beautiful, the productions of which were the most rare and luxurious! Suddenly I pulled her up with a "sic transit gloria mundi" kind of check, and leaping on my feet fired both barrels of my trusty fowling-piece into a flock of whistling avosets far over head, and of this most elegant and curious bird, I brought down two, one of which is now in a cabinet in England, and the other we had next morning fried. Such birds are not at all unpleasant food, though in my own country they would be thrown

aside as unorthodox. I have at times eaten hawks; and many an *owl* may be seen hanging in an Italian market, which, perhaps, are not so dainty morsels as some other birds; but nearly all of the winged and feathered tribe, of what nature or kind soever, are very acceptable to a traveller who has an unstored larder. During the time I was afterwards sitting here, a perfect calmness pervading everything; not a breath of wind, not a sound to be heard, except ever and anon the scream of a wild fowl; a sharp whistling noise, came upon my ear, as of a blast of wind rushing through a narrow channel with inconceivable fury; and lo! a little whirling column of sand not more than a yard or two in height, carried with inconceivable rapidity by a current of air towards the lake, whisked past me, and traversing the surface of the water, cut through it, gathering up the spray for about a quarter of a mile; when suddenly it dispersed, and all was quiet. The current of air did not seem to act upon a space at any time of more than two or three yards in breadth. Whether this was the commencement of one of those fearful whirling sand-clouds spoken of by travellers, or whether it was a young *Jin* of the desert, I know not, but whatever it was, I rejoiced that it was strangled in its birth.

Leaving the margin of the lake, we passed near fifteen or twenty long tents, "black as the tents of Kedar," roughly put together and with very

ragged curtains, forming the encampment of some Bedouins, who seemed to have been stationary there some time, judging by the patches of cultivation around. As we passed, several of the owners came to us, and would probably have given us some trouble had not our Sheikh been with us. One poor wretch was fearfully diseased, and beseeched us to give him some relief, all Franks being in the eyes of these simple people learned in the art of healing; but we had no medicine to offer him, neither knowledge that could benefit his case, and therefore drew off as soon as possible, leaving him in his misery until death might relieve him. How many of these poor wretches must die from causes that, if taken in time, by proper medical treatment, might be easily stopped in their course; this being totally out of the reach of the afflicted, they place their trust in charms hung about the part affected, vainly hoping by such fetiches or amulets, enclosing a scrap of paper scrawled with a verse from the Koran, or some mystical emblem, to escape the sword of the great destroyer. The country in the vicinity of this Bedouin settlement was exceedingly wild, chiefly covered with a coarse heath, excepting where here and there a little patch of Arab potato, or green corn, spoke of Bedouin industry. These Fayoum sons of the desert are said to have originally migrated to those parts from Western Barbary. Below this encampment a channel, fed with water from the lake, irri-

gated the land, on the other side of which was a small Egyptian village, merely of three or four mud huts. Nigh at hand sat a woman by the wayside, her unveiled face was rather fascinating than otherwise, in spite of a tawny complexion; her dark lustrous eyes were carefully ornamented with the staining pigment called *khol*,* which drawn between the compressed lids leaves a circling shade of purplish hue, softening and throwing out the white of the eye; and upon her chin were stars and stripes of blue colour. Beholding her, no cry of "Oh! my shame!" escaped her lips, as would have been the case if modesty had not been laid aside with her veil.

About three, p.m., we forded a canal twenty feet wide, and rather beyond the depth of our steeds; mine scrambling up the opposite bank, after a vain effort rolled over backwards into the water; but having a strong suspicion of what was going to happen, I sprung over his head, and catching the knolls of grass on the shore, saved myself a drenching. After traversing a plain covered with heath, low bushes, and coarse grass, intermingled with a species of white flowered carix; we entered a fine pasture country, much resembling the marshes in the south of England, called "levels;" the lands being divided by channels for water. Cattle were numerous here, particularly buffaloes and sheep, the latter having very long rough hair,

* Powdered antimony made into a kind of paste.

rather than wool, of a reddish hue. With a Bedouin we tried to strike a bargain for a lamb, but he refusing a just price, the intended victim capered its joy; neither did we much need its death, as we were pretty well stocked with wild ducks. A jackall crossed our path twenty or thirty yards a-head of us, but succeeded in dashing into a field of sugar-cane, otherwise I would have stopped the yelping of the thieving beast that night. We now drew near to the extensive mud village of *Senures*, which stands upon a lofty mound, partly artificial and partly natural; and our tents were pitched on the summit of this elevation, to the west of the village, and overlooking a valley immediately below us, where was a luxurious grove of palm-trees, full of the sacred dove.

The following morning was Sunday, the 19th of February. A day we refrained from travelling on. Opposite our tent stood a huge mud edifice, merely presenting to us a high flat wall, with a square tower rising out of it, whilst all around the top of this wall was a kind of chevaux de frize, composed of rough boughs of prickly mimosa. This we took to be a rude fortress, but were told it was a granary for the Pasha's corn. The protection of our Sheikh being no longer necessary, we here bid him adieu, after a parting pipe and cup of coffee; he grieved parting with us, he said, for it would have pleased him much to travel many months, to drink our tea and eat our maccaroni.

neither of which luxuries he had before met with; but as we had neither tea or maccaroni to spare, we did not humour him. Carrying his hand to his mouth and forehead, he made his obeisance, then taking one of our hands, pressed it to his lips; after which, putting his finger to his eye, he made a short speech, denoting that he regarded us with as great affection as that most valued organ, or, in plain English, we were to him as the "apple of his eye." With another *salaam*, wishing us a prosperous voyage, he mounted and was off. The banks of a stream just below our tent swarmed with the green sandpiper. Two beautiful little partridges, which I had killed just before arriving at Senures, I took the skins off this day. These birds are very different from the desert partridges, which are not to be found at all in the cultivated country, where their sandy colour amongst the green herbage would betray their presence to their pursuers. The partridges of the cultivated district are about the size of a dove, with a most beautifully-marked plumage, and one stiff feather in the tail extending beyond the rest, giving it the character of a pintail; they fly in large flocks and more like the golden plover than partridges; neither is their note very dissimilar to the whistle of a plover, though somewhat shriller; the velocity of their flight is very great, and sometimes they will rise high in air, so as to be lost to the sight;

but their general mode is to take a circuit when disturbed, and then settle again at short distances, thus affording excellent sport: often when rising they are so closely packed that in all probability the sportsman may bring down several at a shot: the cock and the hen differ much in plumage, the former being much darker and brindled than the latter, which is of a lightish brown, covered with speckles of a deeper colour. Their flesh is excessively good, quite equal, we fancied, to the English partridge. Immense skeins of wild geese passed to and fro during the day, noisy as a troop of jackals. A continual firing of guns at some distance attracting our observation, we were informed that a marriage had taken place of the daughter of a Sheikh of a neighbouring village, and this was their method of rejoicing; though one would imagine powder far too valuable there, thus to waste. The country around Senures is naturally rich, but the crops rank with weeds from bad cultivation. I added a good many flowers here to my herbarium, but nothing very peculiar; the turf beneath the palm-grove at hand was quite gay with a small double-flowered species of trefoil. Again this night did our tent nearly fall, for the wind rose suddenly as the night previous; but this time the fault was not the loose sand giving way to the tent-pins, but the hard earth needing iron, instead of wooden ones as ours were. "Experientia docet." We were obliged to run out, and

make them as fast as we could, again having recourse to extra stays. We remarked whilst here the peculiar cry of discontent proceeding from working buffaloes; much resembling that of an overloaded camel. The next day we left Senures for "Medinet el Fayoum:" lowering clouds obscured the sky, betokening we thought, rain; but none answered our expectations. After keeping along by the walls of the village nearly a quarter of a mile, we followed a road through a grove of palm-trees, and passing across an open cultivated plain, saw before us the village of *Bajmout*, at a short distance to the north of which we found two piles of vast blocks of fine stone, some fifty yards apart; these blocks lay in ranges one above another to the height of thirty-five or forty feet; evidently denoting a fallen structure of great size and solidity, for the ground for a great space around was scattered with blocks and fragments. Of the antiquity of these remains no one can doubt on beholding them, for there is nothing at all of that character of building of modern date, to be met with there. Some natives at hand called this spot, as near as I could arrive at it from their mouths, "*Saynoum*," but a description of it I have never found, and probably caught the name very incorrectly.* Passing along the western outskirts of the village of Bajmout, and through another Egyptian settlement a short distance from it,

* Appendix.

with three Sheikhs' tombs in the outskirts, we entered a plain covered with considerable crops of young corn, the track keeping meanwhile near a rippling brook. This plain seemed a favourite resort for the little partridge, several large flocks of which we sprung, and shot a few brace. About eleven, a.m., we saw the mounds denoting the site of the ancient city of "*Crocodilopolis*," or as it was afterwards named by the Greeks, "*Arsinoe*." The modern "*Medinet el Fayoum*" showed its tall minarets a small distance farther to the south-east, and shortly were we riding through its northern *faubourg*. Before arriving here, I shot in an old pit, where they had made a home of a hole in the bank, two specimens of the little owl, called in Italy the "*civettà*," or coquette, a name very applicable to it from its coquettish action, when approached. We afterwards found them very numerous in Syria, and frequently were much diverted by the ludicrous attitudes and polite bows with which they acknowledged our presence. The ruins at *Ras el Ain*, between Jaffa and Antipatris, proved a favourite haunt of these birds, and so unaccustomed were they to disturbance that they would allow us to get within a very few yards, before retreating to their dark abodes in the old walls. In Italy they are in great repute for attracting robins and other small birds, by their cry and strange evolutions, to draw around, thus bringing them into the snare of the

fowler, who from a short distance watches his little civettà's coquetting, with an anxious eye; moreover, the Italians eat these little owls, filthy birds as they are in diet, and abounding as they do in vermin. Amidst the dark foliage of the cypress and the ilex, the civettà finds a favourite home, and from it proceeds that soft and melancholy, but still melodious whistle, which to my mind adds not a little to the charm of an Italian evening's walk. I might on our way to Medinet el Fayoum have shot a large eagle, which sat within a very short distance of me for some time upon a mud cliff; but fearing I should not find time to skin it, or a sufficient quantity of arsenical paste to preserve it when skinned, I did not shorten the span of life of this noble bird.

That part of the suburbs of Fayoum we first passed through was exceedingly foul, and bordered by pools of most offensive stagnant water, fraught with disease. The inhabitants looked as uninviting as their habitations; filthy women sat about in crowds at the doors, carding cotton, and making grimaces at the wayworn travellers, whilst dogs and children kept in the neighbourhood of our heels, equally noisy and insulting. Passing out at the eastern suburb, we dismounted amongst some olive trees close on the brink of the great canal, "*Bahr Jousef*," and there pitched our tents, but not without doubts as to the wisdom of so doing, thinking that perhaps a baneful

malaria might arise from the water, and be nourished beneath the thick branches of the olive grove; but no other spot presenting itself near at hand, except a square in the town full of sprawling, idle, and riotous Albanian soldiers, whose society we were very shy of, we deemed it best to stop where we were; neither did we suffer any ill by doing so. After taking some lunch, and resting a little, we walked into the town. Never in Egypt did I see such a revolting sight as the generality of the lower orders of females in this city; they were abominable in their hideousness, perfect harpies, only to be compared to resuscitated mummies, with their scorched yellow skins, and pendant wrinkled breasts hanging about; whilst upon their hips sat astride, their bantlings, promising beauty as peerless as their parents: all these houris were adorned with armlets and bracelets, some of clay, others of brass; bead necklaces, also, were in great request; and stars and stripes were tatooed upon their faces, with circles and other fanciful devices of the first Egyptian fashion, vying in execution, with intricate designs pricked in the same blue pigment on their hands and arms; thus did they set off their hideousness to great advantage.

CHAPTER XVII.

FAYOUM EXCURSION.

Medinet el Fayoum.—Site of ancient city.—Dried Bedouin.—Robber.—Machines for irrigation.—Leave Medinet el Fayoum.—Curious shrub.—Encampment.—Muleteers desert us.—Jackalls.—Nocturnal alarm.—Pelican shooting.—Memphis.—Ovens for chicken hatching.—Reach Cairo.

The population of Medinet el Fayoum amounts to about four thousand souls, we were told; and, besides mosques, the city contains several Coptic churches. We found its streets narrow, winding, and dirty, the houses built chiefly of mud bricks, baked in the sun, and its atmosphere loaded with all perfumes but agreeable ones; as for the rose-water for which this place is so famed, we could neither find any by scent or inquiry. Passing through the city, and traversing its chief bazaars, which seemed very mean and poorly stocked with commodities, we went out to the north, and examined the site of the ancient city of Arsinoè, of which nothing now appears but a series of hills, composed entirely of pottery, dust, vitrified substance showing the action of fire, and quantities of the blue antique pottery, before mentioned as

common in such places. One curious stone, however attracted our attention; and we afterwards regretted not having made a sketch of it. This stone was about twenty feet high, and perhaps twelve wide, but not more than a foot in thickness; the side presented to us was concave, the back part being concealed by a mound of rubbish, the summit of which was on a level with the top of the stone. Upon the concave surface were several curious grooves, running perpendicularly from top to bottom; some of which were very slight indentations, as if merely formed by water running down, but others were evidently works of art, and apparently intended for channels for water; the greater part of these grooves were filled up with the clay nests of the same bee before observed as occupying the hieroglyphics of the Obelisk at Heliopolis. Of what this stone could be a portion we could not form an opinion, neither did the natives seem to know, as far as we could judge by the shaking of their heads when we made inquiring signs to them; for we had no interpreter with us, having left Elias in the town to lay in a stock of bread and rice, and to endeavour to procure some rose-water. After leaving this stone I picked up a portion of a human skull, whereupon one of the Arabs ran off, and, mounting a high mound, returned with a complete dried man under each arm, which he threw with a triumphant air at my feet: the rattle of their bones, making a melancholy noise within

their parched tenements, was rather revolting; but taking one of their heads by way of memento, I walked off: upon a little observation, however, it striking me that there was something about the physiognomy of my relic, not at all of the mummy character, neither finding any cerement about it, the truth flashed upon my mind: it was the head of a lately-deceased Bedouin, who, as usual, stuffed by his friends into a hole in the ground, had thus become dried by the sun's piercing with its scorching rays the very slight shroud of sand thrown over him. I bowled the grinning head away. Part of the hilly surface near the modern Medinet is turned into a cemetery of the city. Numerous domed tombs of sheikhs, and private turbaned tombs of other individuals more lowly, were shadowed by overhanging mimosa and tall date palm, whilst here and there a vista through the sacred grove showed the white towers and spiring minarets of the city of the living, mingling, as it were, with the thickly-planted structures of the city of the dead. Medinet el Fayoum is "in the midst of cities that are wasted;" her very foundations are composed of, and laid amongst fallen remnants of glory and pride of former ages. Here let the scoffer of religion and perverter of the prophecies—let him who places confidence in a Volney or a Gibbon stand forth upon the heaps of desolate Arsinoè, gaze over the site of the wasted city of the crocodiles—Crocodilopolis the Magnifi-

cent!—whose gorgeous sculptured temples of the purest marble, dedicated to the sacred crocodile, outvied even the proudest monuments, of Grecian art; in magnificence and costliness superior to the Temple of Diana of the Ephesians or that of the Samian Juno; in extent and sublimity of workmanship, superior even to the Pyramids themselves! Let, I say, the speculative arguer against the truths of God, stand forth upon these mouldering heaps, and overlook these ancient sites, then read the judgments fulmined against Egypt by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah,—the word, as expressly delivered unto "Ezekiel the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar, when the hand of the Lord was upon him;" and surely he will not sit again in "the chair of the scorners."

During the evening several Egyptians and Albanians stationed themselves about our tent; one of the former, an old man with a grey beard, spun a yarn for the benefit of the surrounding audience: he never hesitated a moment, neither did he ever vary his tone or expression in the least, but kept on at a most astonishing rate, without the slightest apparent intention of ever coming to the termination of his tale, so we retired to rest, his monotonous tone being the last sound that struck upon our ears before wrapped in slumber, from which, however, we were presently awakened by a loud report, followed by the whistling of a bullet, then immediately a second, with the same accompaniment: listening for

a moment to see if this visitation was to be repeated, or merely indicated a freak of some passing Albanians making a target of our tent; we unconsciously dropped off to sleep again, without rising from our mats. In the morning it proved, that Elias had seen a fellow entering the tent in a stealthy manner, upon which he fired at him with his pistols, and said he believed he wounded him. This nocturnal intruder was, without doubt, meditating purloining some of our property, and it struck us as very probable that the old tale-teller had kept up his monotonous romance, to engage the attention of our company whilst his friend foraged around.

Not far from our place of encampment was the house of the Governor of Fayoum, quite a respectable-looking whitewashed mansion. Upon the canal bank, a man was employed with a machine for raising the water into a trough for irrigation: a rough pole, slung on to a cross-beam between two posts, had at one end a large stone attached, together with a camel's skull, to weigh up the vessel at the other end when filled with water by dipping in the canal below, whilst the man employed emptied the fluid into a channel cut to receive it, as the vase rose, and then let it down into the canal again for another burthen. This primitive machine is the one in general use, though often you see the water raised by means of large wheels turned by oxen: a number of earthen vases being attached to a cord slung around one of the wheels, and so

arranged as to allow the vases with the revolution of the wheel to fall and rise from the water in regular succession, going down on one side empty and rising filled upon the other, each vase as it turns over the top of the wheel discharges its contents, into a passage cut on the river bank, or into pipes leading to a reservoir. This machine for raising water has been considered to elucidate the passage in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, "Who can stay the *bottles* of heaven." A traveller in Egypt is often annoyed with a most direful scrooping and creeking, tearing his ears; this irrigating-machine causes it; and I never met with one that did not produce such rough music, to be accounted for by the clumsy manufacture of the wheels. Leaving Medinet el Fayoum, we directed our course towards *Maidoum*, being on our way back to Cairo. Keeping nearly direct east for a few hours through a poorly-cultivated, but naturally rich country, the dilapidated remains of the brick Pyramid of *Illahoun* appeared on our right. Two large pools of water, covered with wild fowl, we now coasted along; and there did I prove that a turban is not a proper costume for sporting; for after with great labour and cunning, getting almost within range of some geese, roll after roll of white muslin came tumbling down over my eyes and round my neck, thus manacling me, and giving the fowl an opportunity to be off, alarmed by my struggles to relieve myself, as, sinking deeply in the mud, I trampled

into it one end of my head dress, thus drawing it round my throat almost to suffocation.

We now came once more upon a tract of sand, broken, in parts, by deep ravines, but forming, in the whole, a kind of table land of desert, with the valley of Fayoum on one side and that of the Nile on the other. Here we lost our way for a time, but meeting a Bedouin, pressed him as a guide. Over his shoulder this Arab bore an old matchlock, which going off by accident as we swung along, sent its charge whistling by us. A kind of rubble covered the surface of this tract, mixed with fragments of a talc-like substance, and the flint called "Egyptian pebble," which, when broken, presents a fine vein, capable of receiving a high polish. One spot we passed, where grew a considerable quantity of a shrub with large round downy leaves of a thick fleshy nature, which the Arabs called, as nearly as I could catch the name, "Elshara," and said they used the dried leaves for smoking, when pulverized; a great quantity of milky juice flowed out of it as I broke a specimen, which they gave me to understand was very prejudicial to the eyes. Here, again, we found the desert partridge, several of which we killed; they are larger than the partridge of Fayoum, and of a light sandy colour, with a bright yellow bar under the throat; in the tail is the same projecting stiff feather as in that of the little one of the valley. Towards night we encamped upon the border of

this desert strip, dividing the basin of Fayoum from that of the Nile; on one side we had, therefore, sand hills, and upon the other verdure. We wished to have pitched our tents some time before, but Elias, together with our muleteers, were so urgent not to do so on account of Bedouins that we moved on further. A large canal ran close by us on the south, but separated from us by a high embankment, between which and our tents was a considerable pool of water, whilst upon a couple of elevated mounds, about a quarter of a mile off, above the reach of inundation, were two little Egyptian villages, with a few palms scattered amongst the huts. A league or two to the north was the ruined Pyramid of *Maidoum*, the base of which was concealed by immense masses of *débris*, probably formed by the lower gradations having given way; but above this accumulation of rubbish three or four retreating tiers, were still left. Applying to the sheikhs of the villages near, for a guard during the night, (our attendants still quaking lest unwelcome visitors should come down upon us,) we found that we could get no one from either of them, and therefore sent a messenger to another village at some distance; which messenger not appearing again, neither any guard, every one of our coward muleteers absconded after dark to the nearest village, leaving us, with our Greek and our cook, to defend one another in case of danger. At

the earnest request of Elias, we heaped all our property into the centre of our own tent, and forming a triangle with our mats, thus walled in our chattels with our bodies during the night, Elias forming the base of the triangle. Troops of jackalls, after dark, serenaded us with their mournful yelpings, of all cries the most sad and melancholy. Imagine some dozen children of tender age, mourning and sobbing to allay their pain, then bursting forth in chorus with bitter and heartrending lamentation; such is the cry of the jackall. The soul of a tender mother would be rent, her heart would burst with grief, and her eyes with tears, if the jackall's wild complaining note struck upon her ear. We thought we should have become "a portion for the foxes," but an Egyptian cemetery nigh at hand was doubtless their court, for they delight in sacrilegious violations of the dead. But another sound far more mysterious than their ululations haunted me as, crouching upon my face near the tent, I patiently awaited the approach of these clamorous visitors; it was a sound I could not at all comprehend, but after a time arrived at the conclusion that a body of men were wading across the canal, there being a most infernal commotion of the waters, a most astonishing splashing and spluttering! summoning Elias from the tent, we both listened, and were both equally confounded; until drawing cautiously nearer to the scene of action the mystery was unravelled;

thousands and tens of thousands of huge fish were leaping and plunging in nocturnal gambols, disturbing the face of the waters, and our equanimity; the whole flood seemed composed of fish: enough were here to supply the Queens of Egypt with perfumes and rich robes from the age of Mœris even until this day, had they been caught and converted into talents of silver as of old! Some pelicans upon the canal were also adding their clamour to these mingled sounds of fish and jackalls; it is a hideous noise that this bird makes; a kind of unpleasant snoring deep but loud. Our Albanian, by some cunning manœuvre, managed to shoot one of them during the night, and came labouring in with it upon his back, for its weight was enormous, and its admeasurement, from the tip of one wing to that of the other, ten feet and four inches, whilst from the tip of the bill to the point of the tail was six feet three inches; the length of the bill, from the eye to the tip, being exactly eighteen inches and a-half. The flesh of this bird is said to be pretty good, but coarse; Belzoni compares it to mutton. We wished some of this one cooked, but it was not, therefore we had no opportunity of confirming that traveller's opinion. The night passed without further disturbance, our worst enemies having been the jackalls. In the morning, at an early hour, the sheikh of the village we had last sent to, over night, came to our tent, and apologized to us for not sending guards, stating

that he had never heard of our arrival until meeting one of our cowardly attendants that morning, who now came dropping in one by one. This sheikh offered himself as a guide to us, but we did not require him; therefore, giving him some tobacco, we started off again, hoping to get half way to the ruins of Memphis before night. Our road now lay for many miles along the embankment of the canal upon our right, there being large pools, as well as a multitude of tributary canals and little channels for irrigation on the other hand. Upon one of these pools were a number of pelicans and flamingoes, as well as other birds. Creeping stealthily through a field of beans until within shot, our Greek fired, knocking down a pelican with the first barrel and a flamingoe with the second; the latter fell in the midst of the pool, far out of reach, but the pelican rising with his brethren in the air, soared round and round, then down he came from a vast height, for he was a doomed bird, a slug having taken effect in its breast. Two Egyptians were near the spot where it fell, cultivating the land; running up they strove with it; it was a severe struggle in spite of his tremendous fall; but at length grappling the huge bird, off they made, our kilted Greek shouting with rage in full pursuit. The burthen was heavy, and the robbers were forced to stop, upon which it was seized and borne to us. We encamped this night near a little mud village, the name of which we neglected to obtain. Our supply

of charcoal was exhausted, rendering it necessary to go a foraging for fuel to cook some dinner. Not a man was to be found in the village, and what few women there were, proved wondrous shy, running into their houses, and concealing themselves. Elias however, rushing into one where several had taken refuge, seized some bits of dried reed and dung cake, with which we made a fire at last; but upon re-examining our water skins we found them empty, and not a drop was to be obtained without sending to the Nile, which was about two miles off; thus our dinner was delayed till a very late hour, which was annoying, as we were oppressed with hunger, having consumed all our Arab bread the day before, and so had nothing to eat since early in the morning. By way of pastime I watched a couple of the little owl "strix noctua" flitting round our tent, and heartily wished the solemn heralds of the night were cooked for my supper instead of seeking their own.

The "fragrant morn was up again," and bright sunbeams revelling in dew, when a noble dish of fricaseed partridges shrouded in rice made their appearance for breakfast. The "harbinger of day" had indeed "unbarred the gates of light" considerably earlier than we deemed it pleasant to unloose the ropes of our tent door to admit her, for the disturbance of the preceding night, and the fatigue of the passed journey, made us rather idly inclined. However, quickly despatching our breakfast, and

gathering our train together, onward we proceeded in a northern direction, pursuing a course for some distance along an elevated causeway, with numerous dykes and flood-gates here and there, serving to regulate the waters during inundation. The Valley of the Nile was here of considerable width; and many isolated hills, of small elevation, with precipitous sides, and flat summits, broke the level of the plain, upon the eastern shore. About three p.m., the Pyramids of Dashour became visible. We passed through many villages on our way, in all of which the women were generally engaged in spinning cotton, of which, here and there, we observed considerable plantations. Flax is also extensively grown there; a production of Egypt mentioned in Isaiah xix.:—"Moreover, they that work in fine flax shall be confounded:"—and so it has literally proved. The fabrication of fine linen, for which this country in ancient times was celebrated, is now at a very low ebb, though considerable quantities of a coarse and common sort is made up.

Our progress to-day was very small, for the fatigue of our donkeys, (which had so far borne the journey wonderfully,) had now become so excessive as to make it difficult to force them on. We were also considerably delayed by our baggage mules taking a wrong turn, so that we lost them for some time. The country traversed was rich with saintfoin, beans, and millet; of which latter plant, our men eat some of the leaf, and pronounced it "*Tieb!*" ("Good!")

patting their stomachs at the same time with their hands, as signifying that it afforded some sort of consolation to the interior. This millet is what they call "doura," and of the grain of it they sometimes make the Arab bread-cakes. I obtained no specimens of birds to-day, having employed the greatest part of my time in sitting on my donkey sucking sugar-cane, the juice of which is very refreshing and cooling. The nearer the root the more plenteous did I find the saccharine juice contained in the stem of this vegetable; whereas at four or five joints from the ground there seemed to be hardly any.

The following day we reached the site of Memphis, close upon the village of *Metrahenny*, which is pretty satisfactorily proved to occupy part of the site of that once most "illustrious of cities," rendered such by *Menes*, (the earliest king of the first dynasty succeeding the demigods and heroes,) who transferred the seat of empire from *No Ammon*, or Thebes, to *Noph*, or Memphis, above two thousand years before the birth of Christ. That great ruler of Egypt reigned, according to the learned Dr. Hales, two thousand four hundred and twelve years before our era, so that now four thousand years "their cloudy wings expand around us" as we vision Memphis in her pride! The seat of the worship of Osiris is no more! the temple of Vulcan, raised by the good king, and dedicated to the "Supreme Being," is altogether gone! the shrine of the goddess Venus is wasted away! and so are all the thousand palaces and

temples of this city, whose magnificence was such as it was deemed could never die! Great and famous as she was, yet now her very situation is doubted and discussed by learned men; and if this is her site where we now were encamped, Noph is truly "waste and desolate."—"Her princes were deceived;" her day is darkened, and a cloud has covered her, and a few fragments of her ruins alone are worthy of note. Amongst these we noticed an ancient capital of a marble column, with the sculptured head of Isis upon it, easily recognised by the ears similar to those of her symbol, the *cow*. There lay the representation of that goddess, half buried in the slimy mud, upon whose statues was read the proud inscription, "*I am all that has been, that shall be; and none among mortals has taken off my veil!*" But her veil has now been raised, and she is a thing of nought. "Thus saith the Lord God, I will destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph." One enormous fragment of a statue was near our tent, fallen upon its face in a hole. Whether it is of "Sesostris, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who subdued this country by his arms," who can say? Of whatever mighty hero it is a representative, his position is neither dignified nor becoming at present. Its measurement is twenty-two paces. It is one vast block of red granite, and the features are finely cut, giving that mild expression generally produced by the Egyptian chisel. This piece of sculpture has

been noticed by many travellers. It belongs, we were told, to the British Museum, and surely it is well worth bringing off, for though colossal in magnitude, its relative proportions are beautiful, so that it may be termed elegant, vast as it is. Abd Allatif, in his relation of the site of Memphis, speaks of a monolithic chapel as being one of the wonders of the ruins of that city, somewhat resembling, by his description, the shrine of the goddess Latona, mentioned by Herodotus as in the city of "Butos," at the Sebennetic mouth of the Nile, which shrine was fashioned out of one rock, two hundred and forty feet in circumference, and had been brought from the island of Philæ, a distance of two hundred leagues. Abd Allatif's monolithic temple was, however, far inferior to that in size, being, he states, only "nine cubits high, by eight in length, and seven in breadth." And speaking of statues upon this site, he says, "As for the idols found amongst these ruins, whether their number or extraordinary size be considered, they surpass description, nor can even a conception of them be formed." The worthy old gentleman bursts forth in generous indignation at the ill-treatment portions of these ruins had sustained in his time, and in relating the mode of fastening some of the stones by placing copper binders about them, exclaims, "Vile and wretched individuals have sought after these bands of copper, and torn away a considerable quantity. In order to get to

them they have broken a number of the stones. Indeed, to obtain them they have taken a deal of pains, and have left memorials of their meanness and sordid cupidity."

Within a very short distance of our tent was a small sheet of water, lying rather north of the chief remains of the ancient city. This is deemed by some as, perhaps, a portion of the lake mentioned by Herodotus, who, after relating how, as the Egyptians told him, Menes detached the ground on which Memphis stands from the waters of the river, and, constructing a vast dyke, led them off by means of a canal, which the Persians, who held dominion there in his time, regularly preserved, further informs us, that "to the north and west of Memphis he also sunk a lake, communicating with the river." Groves of palm and mimosa, shading numerous and massive fragments of the temples and shrines of the ancient metropolis of Egypt, surround this piece of water, and wild birds feed upon its muddy banks, some of which I obtained by dint of perseverance and stratagem, for they were very shy and wary.

Before departing from hence for Cairo, which is only a short day's journey, we despatched one of our men to Saccara, (which lies but two or three miles westward of Metrahenny,) to obtain from Mr. Bonomi several pots of the mummy ibis, which he had kindly taken charge of until our return. We sent at the same time a score or so of pigeons,

which we had shot by the way, thinking they might be acceptable. It is curious to observe with what care our Mahomedan followers drained the blood from the birds when shot for food, bearing in mind the precept in the Koran, "Verily God hath forbidden you to eat that which dieth of itself, and *blood*, and swine's flesh," &c. They cut, therefore, the throats or pulled off the heads of the birds as they picked them up, that the blood might escape: bringing to our minds the Levitical decree, "Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings. Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people." The Arabs deserve considerable credit for this stanch observance of the prohibition; for it seems that their Pagan ancestors had rather a predilection for blood, which, drawing it from a living camel, it is said they would broil and eat with as great *goût* as our north countryman does his black-pudding. Upon the return of our messenger, we were off for Djizeh once more, where we paid a visit to the ovens for hatching chickens, of which a minute description may be found in Mr. Lane's excellent work upon the "Modern Egyptians." He tells us the degree of temperature at which they keep the chambers where the eggs are deposited is from one hundred to one hundred and three degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, and that the hatching of the egg takes place generally upon the

twenty-first day after its being put in. The following statement he takes from an Egyptian newspaper of 1831:—

	Lower Egypt.	Upper Egypt.
Number of establishments for the hatching of fowls' eggs in the present year	105	59
Number of eggs used.....	19,325,600	6,878,900
Number spoiled	6,255,867	2,529,660
Number hatched.....	13,069,733	4,349,240

One of the attendants of this establishment told me what number had been hatched last year: I neglected however to note the statement, but I think it was not much above eleven thousand. It is an unpleasant institution to examine, full of dried dung-cakes for fuel, and little vaulted chambers of disagreeable atmosphere; nevertheless we crawled into several of these, in spite of smell and vermin.

The evening of this day, the 24th of February, found us once more seated on the divan in the great dining saloon of the hotel at Cairo, this little excursion having engaged us eleven days. And a very pleasant excursion it is, and for many reasons well worth taking, although the lustrous "City of the Crocodiles" is but a heap of dust and rubbish; the wondrous Labyrinth has disappeared; and the Lake of Mœris (if Birket el Keroun denotes its site) is sorely dwindled; whilst its island Pyramids, each topped with its stone Colossus proudly throned six hundred feet or more aloft in air, are altogether sunk and gone; and although the treasures of the

fertile soil of this famed valley are no longer drawn forth, as of old, by industrious hands gathering its abundance for their own benefit, but go to feed avarice, whilst the labourer starves, and disgusted, leaves his field a prey to Lybian sands! Neither will the traveller within this once so excellently favoured region find so great an allowance of the "parfums de la rose, mêlés aux suaves émanations de la fleur d'orange" as the romantic Savary leads him to expect; for the manufacture both of rose-water and orange flower water has considerably decreased of late years at Fayoum, and rose thickets and orange groves have consequently diminished. The great object of this trip, as I have before said, was to get a slight introduction to a tenting life; and by it we obtained many hints that proved useful afterwards, and also discovered the qualities of our Greek, which had proved by no means such as one would wish to find possessed by his right-hand man when mid desert; therefore we gave him notice to quit immediately that we arrived at Cairo.

As to whether Lake Keroun at all indicates the site of the ancient Lake Mœris,* we had neither time nor talent to make the examinations requisite to found an opinion on the point; neither had we either of us sufficiently studied the question to render any remarks upon it, naturally made between ourselves when on the

* Appendix.

spot, anything more than superficial and therefore unworthy of record. Not only historical research, and a most minute examination of the country, but also a deeply scientific investigation of the geological formation of the whole district, must of necessity be made before any conclusive testimony can be arrived at as to the position of this marvellous work of the ancient kings of Egypt. Certainly we saw nothing in the character of that small portion of the coast of Birket el Keroun which we visited to signify that man had ever contributed to its formation; but, on the contrary, it appeared to us indubitably the work of nature alone, as other travellers have also noticed.* And assuredly we stumbled upon no remains of sufficient magnitude or magnificence to lead us to exclaim,—Here surely stood that splendid memorial of the twelve kings, the beauty of which clouded the proudest monuments of art at Athens, Ephesus, and Samos,—"the Labyrinth of the City of the Crocodiles!" What remains of splendour, or what traces of the industry and science of the ancient Egyptians, employed for the benefit of their country, may be hidden beneath the overwhelming sands of Lybia, which have for ages been gradually narrowing the bounds of fertilization, it is left to imagination to picture.

* "Le lac de Birquet-êl-Kerun, qui est le lac Mœris de Strabon et de Ptolemée, ne peut jamais être regardé que comme l'ouvrage de la nature."—*Denon.*

From what we had seen of the land and its inhabitants during this short excursion, we could but cry, "How has the usurping brother of the good Osiris too well succeeded in effacing all traces of civilization!" Typhon, in the form of barbarism, without question still sways his sceptre over Egypt. We had marked choked up canals, ruined embankments, uncultivated wastes, where a little industry might gather the richest crops; tracts of sand, where a little science and attention might have kept the desert within its limits; cities, once encircled with flocks and herds, once crowded with the polished subjects of Osiris, now half buried in barren sands, shapeless ruins; the cunning jackal and the fierce hyæna their only inhabitants! And as to the population of those portions of the country which Nature forbids to become desert, ever distributing fertility over the surface by the annual fattening floods of her great river forming rich beds for vegetation, which require merely scattering of seed to become a garden, there we beheld men, women, and children, often naked, and always bedaubed with colours and tattooed, either sprawling in idleness, amongst wigwams of mud of the most barbarous construction, and reeking with dirt and vermin, or, perhaps, males and females sweltering in the sun in gangs, with a Government overseer, armed with a hippopotamus hide whip, urging them to labour with tools that the most primitive savages

might smile at. And as to decency and morality amongst the Fellah population of Egypt, they may be said to be utterly unknown. Indeed, from all I have heard and what little I have seen, I should very much doubt whether amongst the most remote savages, such bestiality and total deprivation of all ideas of decency could be met with as amongst those of that race not inhabiting the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, where, perhaps, they may be a little more polished, as far as exterior decency is concerned.

Mehemet Ali has of late paid some attention to the advancement and extent of cultivation; and it is indeed highly to his interest to do so, as from the soil he so immediately derives by far the greatest portion of his revenue. He it is that the favourable or unfavourable seasons and the state of the Nile most intimately affect. As to the Fellah, if he can procure a sufficiency of dates and *doura* to keep body and soul together it is enough; he knows that any profit derived from the sweat of his brow he will be robbed of. If the Pasha studied to ameliorate the condition of the lower ranks of his subjects, the exclamation might not so frequently strike upon the traveller's ear, expressing a wish that the French or English would take the country. Mere policy surely requires such an amelioration; but despotism and tyranny generally run hand in hand. One is almost led to believe that Oriental despots prefer feeling that the hearts

of their subjects throb with hatred instead of love, so heavily do they grind them with *miri*, poll-tax, and other imposts. It was this spirit of oppression so severely dealt in by Mehemet Ali, that roused the hatred of the Syrians against him; much as they groaned beneath the Turkish yoke, they found the Egyptian would be heavier, and consequently were glad to assist in shaking it off. Again the system of conscription, carried out with such severity by the Pasha is another source of bitter discontent and fearful misery amongst the lower ranks. Rather than be brutally torn away from their homes, families, and all they hold dear, they turn their hands upon themselves, tear out their eyes, cut off their fingers, or break their teeth, to render themselves incapable of serving in the army. And for this same purpose does the mother joyfully maim her offspring, in the like fearful manner, holding light its present agony, and the total loss of such a valued member even as the eye, when picturing to herself the future sufferings her child will otherwise inevitably be exposed to. Thus it is that in Egypt, as well as Syria and Turkey, the Frank is smitten with astonishment when he notes the numerous blind and maimed that pass him in the streets and highways, many of them entirely deprived of sight, groping in utter darkness, numbers with one eye alone, others with an eye hidden by a rag, it having been lately sacrificed. Some of these cases doubtless arise from disease,

but immense numbers from the former cause, as is well attested by those who have resided in these countries.

We visited the slave-market one day before leaving Cairo, but found there merely about a score of Abyssinian and Nubian girls of the lowest grade, and in a complete state of nudity, excepting a piece of linen, or a leathern girdle round the loins, and bracelets on their arms. It was a horrible place, dark and filthy, where they were crowded together, squatting on the ground, with a large dish before them containing some food, but which they immediately left when they caught sight of us, and, rushing forward, mobbed us on all sides, eager to be purchased. Their fascinations, however, were not at all according to the Frank taste, their heads being like black clotted mops, and dripping with oil and other grease, whilst their bodies shone with great lustre, from the free application of the same unguents. The juice derived from the crushed berry of the castor-oil plant is in their eyes a precious ointment, and with it they smear themselves from head to foot, and the greater the polish, the more perfect is the beauty. Finding we did not intend to purchase, in spite of their showing their white teeth and flashing eyes to the best of their ability, a cry was raised for *backsheesh*, which we gladly gave them, that we might escape as quickly as possible, for our "noses were in great indignation."

The girls called Abyssinians (though not natives

of that country but of regions beyond Kordofan) are often pretty, though of a dark copper colour; and their prices are said to vary from ten to twenty pounds. With the Turks they are much in vogue, though a white slave is, of course, of far greater value than one of these castor-oil beauties. Very few slaves are now to be found in the Cairo market, owing probably to the interference of the English Government with regard to the great annual slave hunts which Mehemet Ali used regularly to carry on amidst the Nuba mountains, and other regions far south; not only that he might pay his troops in human flesh instead of money, but also for captives to sell for the benefit of the revenue.* These slave hunts, though nominally put an end to, are still said to be carried on by the Pasha *sub rosâ*, and the markets of Constantinople are well supplied by this means.

That the slaves in Egypt, after purchase, are, generally speaking, humanely treated, and become perfectly happy in the families they are in, being often regarded as members rather than slaves, so that, weaned from old affections, they enjoy life to the full, is well confirmed by those who have had good opportunities of proving the truth

* See Ignatius Pallme's description of Mehemet Ali's slave hunts in his "Travels in Kordofan," lately published by Mr. Madden; and the "British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter," No. 28. 1841.

Ignatius Pallme tells us that from the conquest of Kordofan by Mehemet Ali, in 1821, up to the year 1825, forty thousand of the inhabitants of the Nuba mountains had been seized as slaves, and by the year 1839 two hundred thousand.

of that statement. But how horrible their sufferings from the time they are seized by the brutal slave-hunters until they arrive at their ultimate destinations! An order is given for a grand slave hunt; the unfortunate negroes, blockaded in their mountain villages by the Pasha's troops, deprived of access to the springs of water and of all means of adding to their miserable stores of food, often kill themselves, their wives, and children, rather than surrender to the coward monsters who are lying in wait for them. Or in some cases, where the village from its position or otherwise may not be capable of offering any defence, the inhabitants fly to the caves in the mountains: but the merciless invaders of their homes are too well acquainted with such places of refuge, and, scouring the mountains, light fires of suffocating combustibles at the mouths of every hollow that can possibly afford shelter, thus driving those to come forth who are not desperate enough to prefer death to captivity. The *razzia* at last over, the troops collect their captives into a body and, fettering them with galling straps and huge weights to prevent their running away,* drive them on with

* "To prevent flight, a *sheba* is hung round the neck of the full-grown slaves; it consists of a young tree about six or eight feet in length and two inches in thickness, forming a fork in front; this is bound round the neck of the victim so that the stem of the tree presents anteriorly; the fork is closed at the back of the neck by a

blows of musket-butts and scourges, or tying them, dying with fatigue, to camels, drag them, until again they have arrived at the station from whence they started for the hunt.* Then the wretched negroes that have survived the fatigues and cruelties of the march are drafted off, some into the regiments as recruits, some to the soldiers as slaves by way of pay, whilst others, especially the youngest and best looking, are delivered up to the merchants, who convey them to Cairo, Constantinople, or wherever the regular mart may be. If half of those seized survive the atrocities of the *razzia* and the march, it is considered an excellent speculation; but often a far greater number fall victims, before their ruthless captors, or the as ruthless merchants, can make money of them. As to the *Gellahs*, or slave merchants, their brutal ill-usage of the boys and girls during the time they are bringing them down the Nile often causes them heavy losses; many of the children jumping overboard and

crossbar, and fastened *in situ* by straps cut from a raw hide; thus the slave, in order to be able to walk, is forced to take the tree in his hands, and carry it before him."—*Ignatius Pallme.*

* "When several of these poor wretches cannot possibly proceed any further, ten or twenty of them are bound by the hand with a rope, the one end of which is attached to the saddle-bow of a camel, and thus those who are half dead are dragged onwards. Even if one of them happen to sink, no mercy is shown, but the fallen man is trailed along the ground, and not liberated, even should he breathe his last, before his arrival at the stated place of rest."—*Ibid.*

drowning; moreover numbers of the malès being mutilated for guardians for the Moslem harems, do not survive the operation, which is performed in the most barbarous manner. I was indeed informed on good authority, whilst at Cairo, that on an average, of a thousand castrates scarcely four hundred survive. They are accordingly sold at great prices.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOURNEY FROM CAIRO TO SUEZ.

Preparations to leave Cairo.—Fatal accident to Mr. Lloyd.—Leave Cairo.—Comet.—Journey to Suez.—The camel.—Speed of dromedary.—Flight of locusts.—Suez.—Sail to Wady Tawârik.—Sea foams or evil waters.—Shells.

Upon the morning of the 7th of March, the court-yard of the "Eastern Hotel" was crowded with groaning camels and dark-eyed Bedouins, whose roughly-manufactured arms and scanty clothing gave them a wild and lawless appearance, as, squatting about in the Oriental style upon the ground, they waited for our baggage, that they might load the camels destined to carry it; for it was on this day that we turned our faces towards the wilderness of Sinai—towards that "great and terrible wilderness" where for forty years the rebel children of Israel were borne up by the hand of the Lord against the horrors of the desert "as a man doth bear his son."

The large *salle à manger* in the above hotel at Cairo offers several very comfortable divans, upon the broad cushions of one of which we were at this time lounging, with our interest-

ing acquaintance, Mr. Lloyd, whose friendship, short as it had been, had added much to the pleasure of our stay in that city. Little did he dream that his sojourn on earth was so nearly closed! Little did he think that the plans of an intended residence amongst the Arabs of Petra, which he had just been giving us a sketch of, were so soon doomed to be overthrown, as looking down from the window upon the court below, he gaily dilated upon the virtues and vices of the several Bedouins and camels we were on the point of taking the command of; evidently well acquainted with them and their properties. His noble figure, set off to advantage by his Arab costume, presented an emblem of health and strength of body, whilst the flashing of intellect in his fine dark eye betokened the spirit full of energy inhabiting that frame. It is a worthy admonition of a wise man of the East, "*If thou shouldst live for a hundred years, never for one moment forget death.*" A few short months elapsed, and that same manly form lay weltering in blood amidst barbarians, far distant from all most dear to him. That same spirit had fled its earthly tabernacle, leaving the world to lament one endowed with rare attainments, and his acquaintances a valued and accomplished member of their circle. "Happy, thrice happy, he who relies on the eternity of the soul, who believes as the loved fall one from

another that they have returned to their native country!"*

Heaps of baggage now strewed the court; large coarse goat-hair sacks, huge boxes of palm-wood, water barrels, bottles, and skins, tents and tent-poles, bags of charcoal and of beans, all destined to be carried by the nine kneeling camels, whose hideous lamentations rent the air as first one article and then another was heaped upon their backs. Ever and anon one would add to the confusion by suddenly leaping on its legs, much to the discomfiture of its half-secured burthen: then would succeed fiery ejaculations on the part of the Arab, who, striking it violently on the neck, uttered that peculiar guttural hiss, at the sound of which the camel is taught to kneel. Twelve of these animals were engaged by us, at the rate of 360 piastres† each camel, to take us the whole journey from hence to within a day of Hebron; two of these twelve were for our own riding, whilst another was devoted to the Shiekh, who headed the party.

Our Albanian, Elias, had so strongly interceded with us to be allowed to continue in our service,

* See Appendix for further particulars relating to the lamentable accident by which Mr. Lloyd met his death.

† About 3*l.* 10*s.* English, or seventeen Austrian dollars and a-half, according to the currency at that time. The value of the Pillared or Mexican dollar, also current in Egypt, was, if I remember right, about twenty-three or twenty-five piastres when we were there.

that most unfortunately, *malgré* his numerous offences, we had retained him until this very morning, when, finding that we had been robbed of money to a large amount, and otherwise feeling very dissatisfied with his conduct, we discharged him altogether, feeling certain that any one whom we might pick up, in the little time that was left us for making a choice, would, in all probability, afford us less trouble than this subtle, long-haired son of Greece. There he now stood in the court, viewing our preparations, arrayed in most gorgeous apparel, covered with velvet and gold, twirling his long moustache, his tarboosh set on one side, with its inordinately long and handsome tassel hanging over his left shoulder, mingling its mass of bright blue floss silk with his long locks, whilst his eyes flashed with contempt and indignation as he scanned the miserable and shabby fellow we had hastily engaged to take his place. "Ha, Signor," said he, as I bade him adieu, "you will repent having left me, before the walls of Cairo are far behind you. What will that wretched creature do for you when you are in difficulty? He will run away instead of fighting, whilst I would shed every drop of blood I have in your defence."

Bidding a farewell to Mr. Lloyd—alas! too truly a last farewell!—we mounted and were off; only, however, withdrawing that night about two miles from the city and there encamping. A bright

light in the heavens attracted our attention as we issued forth from the gates, and the Arabs trembled as they saw it; a token, said they, of a grievous plague. It was the remarkable comet of 1843. Two friends now joined our party, Dr. Stevenson, late Physician to his Majesty the King of Oude, and Mr. Samuel Smith Hill. Let me not here pass over the name of the former gentleman, without an expression of gratitude for his kind attention during the latter portion of our extended journey. The name of the latter may be present to the mind of some of my readers as the author of that talented little work, "*The Emigrant's Introduction to an Acquaintance with the British American Colonies.*" Thus did we start the following morning, a company of four-and-twenty camels, and, counting Arab escort and body-servants, about seventeen men.

It was the 11th day of that same month, that a cry was heard, Môye, môye! (Water, water,) from some of our party.* The Arabs shouted "*Bahr Suweis,*" meaning the Red Sea, or Gulf of Suez. Onward we pressed with anxious haste, but the apparition vanished, for it was—mirage. That same night,

* The similarity of this modern Arabic word for water with the ancient Egyptian word is striking. Josephus, speaking of the finding of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, says—"Hereupon it was that Thermuthis imposed this name *Mouses* upon him, from what had happened when he was put in the river; for the Egyptians call water by the name *mo*, and such as are saved out of it, by the name *uses*, &c."—*Antiq.* ii. 10, 6.

however, we did indeed arrive upon the shores of that most interesting gulf, and pitched our tents beneath the mounds of *Tell Kolzum*, a few hundred yards to the north of the wretched town of Suez.

About three quarters of an hour before reaching Suez, we watered our camels at a well enclosed within a kind of small fort. The water is abominably salt; yet from hence and Ayun Musa, is derived the supply of water for the town. As we rested here, I fancied whether it might not be at that same spot that Moses halted during his flight to Midian, on the Red Sea, to escape the envious Egyptians, whose country he had so lately saved from the devastating hordes of Ethiopia. This well, it appears by the narrative of the Jewish historian, was not very far from the city of Midian, where he tarried, overcome by his laborious journey, and where the seven virgin daughters of Raguel, the priest, were defended by him against the shepherds.

How unchanged are the manners of the inhabitants of the desert! At this day may be often seen the daughters of Suez coming from the city with their vases, to draw water for themselves or their flocks at the spring, as did the daughters of Midian nigh four thousand years ago, as related in the Scripture narrative; and still are they exposed, especially in time of drought, to be driven away by the Bedouin shepherds, before they can fill their vases, or pour any for their flocks into the stone troughs, always found about these eastern wells.

This very well of Suez has more than once been seized and held by the Bedouins, to the distress of the town, and a guard is always stationed there, who watches the water with jealous care.

Four long days had we been in performing a journey that has been accomplished, in cases of emergency, in thirteen hours. Truly we had travelled very leisurely; the pace of loaded camels not averaging more than two miles and a-half the hour. The distance, as given by Niebuhr, across the weary and monotonous waste of sand and gravel that separates the City of Delight from this village of beggary and wretchedness, Suez, is thirty-two leagues. Dr. Robinson gives it as somewhat less than seventy-five statute miles, and Wilkinson as sixty-nine on a straight line, and seventy-four by the track; so that our rate of travelling thus far had exceeded little more than eighteen miles per diem. It is a desolate march indeed; one tree alone occurring, a thorny acacia, which Mr. Stephens dignifies with the title of "a large palm," though it is a miserable bush, and not at all improved in appearance by numerous rags which Bedouins have hung upon its boughs with superstitious reverence. Standing alone in such unbroken solitude, it is a striking object, and a likely one for wild tradition to attach itself to. In the Wady Seil Abu Zeid, where we encamped the night before reaching Suez, there may be found indeed two or three low starved bushes of the

same species of acacia, but otherwise the whole weary waste is utterly devoid of vegetation, excepting a few scorched herbs which here and there are found struggling with the sand for a little life, and which the camel, strolling aside from his companions, joyfully recognises; but even this sorry herbage is rarely descried excepting in the shallow beds which, formed by the winter rains, retain, perhaps, a little moisture below the surface to support its existence.

Two caravans, laden with coffee, passed us on their way to Cairo the second day after we left that city; and here and there a mass of white and bleached bones spoke to us of fatigue not to be sustained even by the all-enduring camel.* Amongst those that carried our baggage was one fine stately old mother, with a beautiful foal of a milky white colour, and it was curious to see how she kept it aloof from the other camels, always walking about forty yards away, on one side or the other. The young one was exceedingly playful, performing great antics when we stopped to rest; but after the second day's journey, both it and its mother flagged very much, so that at night they were generally some distance behind the rest of the train. At the hour of encamping, the burthens being taken off, it is customary to turn all the camels loose, to pick up what they can of the scanty herbage.

* One day we counted nineteen camels on the track, that had died not long before, and heaps of scattered bones besides.

Several of the desert plants these animals will not touch; for instance, the strong-scented henbane which I have mentioned as growing around Cairo, they always avoid with great repugnance: but a kind of wormwood most powerfully fragrant, and of a very pleasant bitter, they crop with the greatest avidity. When, after the encampment, they have thus roamed about for an hour or two, their masters call them around them, and, lying down in a circle, each receives its allowance of beans, and most of them remain quiet at their station all the night. But in the company there are generally one or two riotous uneasy ones, that annoy the tired traveller by moving about, bellowing, and kicking against the ropes of his tent, when they ought to be preparing themselves by sleep for another day's toilsome march: and not only do these evil-disposed ones treat you thus ill at night, but during the course of the day, in all probability, you will see them curvetting about in gambols, always awkward, and on the march rendered still more so by your baggage, which, by this proceeding, is hanging about under their bellies, instead of on their backs. Indeed I was far less pleased with the camel than I had expected; for instead of that patience, meekness, and resignation that one is always led to suppose appertains to the character of this animal, ours displayed the most extreme discontent, ill humour, and, in some instances, ferocity. When they lay down at night to be unloaded, the heavens resounded with their cries

and groans: when they rose in the morning, burthened for the day, the same hideous noise was continued until actually upon the march. I once saw a furious encounter between a savage camel of our train and a Bedouin almost as savage, who, finding he could not master the beast by blows, flew furiously at it, and, seizing with his teeth its long upper lip, hung by it until agony forced the camel on its knees, for the time completely subdued.* When you are upon their backs, many of them have a trick of twisting their heads round and biting you; a proceeding only to be avoided by bestowing an occasional rap on their noses with your stick; for they are wonderfully sensitive on that part, and will seldom renew the attempt after once or twice being thus frustrated. Great as is my abhorrence of the camel in its capacity of riding horse or companion, and fully convinced as I am, that all who have been much in their society will sympathize in this feeling of abhorrence, yet who can view this curious animal without the deepest interest, as, bending beneath its weighty burthen, onward it plods, heedless of burning sun or suffocating drought, so formed by the wise Creator, so wonderfully adapted to the drear sterility and oppressive climate, as well as to the necessities of those inhabiting the tracts of burn-

* An enemy this animal never forgets; the *lex talionis* is acted upon by them as strictly as by the Arabians themselves. "A camel's anger never dies," says the Arab.

ing waste the appointed scene of its existence! Week after week and month after month, if left to its own slow pace, it will travel on with little nourishment; sun-scorched plants, beans, or date stones broken up, or barley made into little cakes, its only sustenance. With a burthen on its back of greater weight than two strong mules could endure for one short day with rest and care, the camel traverses the vast and boundless desert at the rate of twelve hours a day without a halt; breathing meantime a heated stifling air, fraught with choking sand. The wise economy of the Great Being enables it thus to fulfil its allotted labour, by means of the supply of water which it is endued with the power of bearing within it for a resource when necessary. The very "staff of life" to the Arabs, its milk and flesh is food to them; its hair is worked into tents and apparel, and is, moreover, an article of trade; and then again, its dung feeds the fire that tempers the chill night air. And what does mankind owe this useful animal; the only means of carrying on the overland commerce of the east, even from that remote period when Joseph's brethren in Dothan, after casting him into the pit, "lifted up their eyes, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels, bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." At the gates of Babylon, and of "Tadmor in the Wilderness," the camel left the richest products of China, and remotest India,

then onward plodded across the wide Syrian deserts to Phœnice's coast; and triremes glided from the ports of Tyrus, Sidon, Sarepta, and Berytus, to float upon the waters of the "Great Sea," to coast the shores of the land-locked Palus Mæotis, or even to dare the Great Western Ocean to the very Cassiterides, laden with riches brought from India, Mesopotamia, and Babylonia, which could only have reached her ports through the medium of the camel. Phœnicia's narrow territory alone, in spite of Tyrian purple and Sidonian glass, would never have made Tyre and Sidon queens of merchant cities, had it not been for the opening of commerce with the farthest east by means of caravans across the trackless deserts, which poured wealth and celebrity into her gates, making her merchants "princes." Her fame in navigation, then, was derived from her caravan trade, her teeming warehouses freighting her ships of the sea with the costly cargoes of her "*desert ships*," giving birth to that zest for commerce and maritime adventure for which she became so renowned. A passing thought is also due to the utility and endurance of the camel, as proved in modern times: for though the tide of commerce sets no longer towards Phœnicia, and caravans laden with silks and pearls no longer brave the Tartar and the Persian robber hordes, to minister to Roman luxury, traversing Asia from the Chinese ocean to the Syrian coast, as was the case some

thirteen hundred years ago, yet at this day do merchant caravans, greedy of gain, brave toil and sufferings, setting at defiance wandering tribes devoted to rapine, and thus adventurously traverse the six thousand miles, or more, which lie between Russia and the Celestial Empire, exchanging tea, rice, and other southern products, for furs and various articles of Northern growth. And again, laden with slaves, gold-dust, and ivory, the Fezzan camel faces the fearful Lybian desert, a journey of fifty days or more, to reach the capital of Egypt; and from Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, from Darfur and Senaar, great caravans go forth, these to Cairo or Timbuctoo, those to Mecca. Consider also, the gigantic caravans which, since the rise of the False Prophet, have been, and are to this day, seen laden with merchant devotees,—"true believers," holy pilgrims,—pressing on from North and Central Africa, from Europe and remotest Asia, to compass "the Ancient House," the *Caaba*, there to pay their vows, clasping with fervor in one hand the Koran, and in the other, (no less fervently,) amber, shawls, and gorgeously-embroidered silks. Not that this junction of temporal and spiritual interest, so wisely kept in view by the pilgrim to Mecca, is peculiarly characteristic of the *Moslem* devotee; for behind many a *Christian* pilgrim who has humbly entered the gates of Jerusalem with staff and scrip, and peas in his shoes, a long train of heavy-laden sumpter mules, groaning beneath

European productions, might be presently seen, or, at all events, the vessel that bore him to the hallowed shores of Palestine, generally bore with him some little merchandize which he hoped to exchange for Oriental luxuries. Though, doubtless, his mercantile views were as nothing in his sight compared with the one great end for which he had left his native shores, to brave the pirate and the Philistine, yet did he deem it right to keep one eye awake to worldly interests. The urgings of pure spiritual enthusiasm, without question, moved many to brave the dangers of pilgrimage, particularly those who undertook it, possessing no worldly goods: but the urgings of pure mercantile enthusiasm moved others to brave the same dangers and attribute it to devotion. It is justly observed by one of our most eminent writers, in adverting to the above fact, that—"in all their operations, men have a wonderful dexterity in mingling some attention to interest with those functions which seem to be most purely spiritual."

As to the greatness of the speed of the dromedary, (which amongst the Bedouins is nothing more than the lightest-made camel, being exactly of the same form as that animal, but not quite so heavily limbed,) I never saw it illustrated; for though I have sometimes for a short distance driven mine to trot perhaps at the rate of eight miles to the hour, yet it seemed rather laborious to it than otherwise. The instances of their extreme

velocity which one meets with in different authors, are doubtless exaggerations, such, for example, as those related by *Morgan* in his "History of Algiers," who states, that in one night a dromedary will traverse as much ground as a horse would in ten, and then seem as fresh as upon starting; and the match between the white dromedary of Lella Oumane, a princess of that country, against a fleet greyhound and certain barbs of Lybian breed, swifter even than the ostrich. But what was their swiftness to that of Lella Oumane's favourite! The Lybian barbs were covered with foam, and scarcely able to breathe; the greyhound bitch lay down and panted, ready to expire; but the white dromedary came "flying towards us with an amazing velocity, seemingly nothing concerned." That they are the swiftest animals that can bear a long desert journey, cannot be doubted, and their degree of swiftness may justify the comparison in Jeremiah ii. 23, "Thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways:" but in the words of the tenth verse of the eighth chapter of the Book of Esther, often quoted as denoting the swiftness of this animal, there is nothing surely to prove it fleeter than mules or horses; for the King Ahasuerus despatched his letters "by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries."

The camel with two hunches on the back is not to be met with in the deserts that we crossed, it being

almost confined to its native country, the eastern parts of Persia. This species is said to be able to bear above 1,200 lbs. weight; whereas the Arabian camels of the strongest build, cannot bear on a journey more than 600 lbs., and the generality of those used by the Bedouins will not sustain even so great a load as that. The Peruvian camel has a bunchy breast instead of a bunchy back, so that the variety of this animal is considerable and curious. A specimen of Mr. Stephen's *artificial* dromedary we never happened to fall in with.

It requires some attention on the part of the traveller, during a trip through the desert, to see that his camels are fairly loaded; for, as they generally belong to different owners, one man will place as large a load as he can on another's camel in order to save his own, which causes great altercation amongst the Arabs, and breaks down the overloaded animal before the day's journey is over. We found the best method was to make them put aside particular camels to carry their own and their master's fodder; otherwise we often had to wait, when wishing to encamp, for the camel bearing the tent, which, on account of a heavy load of beans besides, had perhaps lagged far behind the rest. After experiencing this annoyance once or twice, we so arranged, that one camel, bearing our two tents, should always be kept a-head and hastened on during the latter half hour of the day's journey; so that by the time our tent

was pitched, the remainder of the caravan reached the spot of encampment.

The day before our arrival at Suez we passed through a flight of locusts, flying from the south-east to the north-west, so that we, proceeding almost due east, cut their breadth; and travelling at the rate of two miles and a-half an hour, it took us one hour and a-quarter to pass through them. "The sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle." (Rev. ix. 9.) Niebuhr observes that "the swarms of these insects darken the air, and appear at a distance like a cloud of smoke, and the noise they make in flying is frightful and stunning, like that of a waterfall." These locusts which we saw were red legged; being of that species, I suppose, which the above traveller says the Arabs call "*Micken*," and relate to be fatter, or more succulent, than any of the other sorts. I made a little Arab boy catch several for me; by no means an easy matter, even though you have something to knock them down with, they being quickly alarmed and flying off. The Bedouins are said to roast them alive, and devour them with great delight; but those with us paid no attention to them at all, though they might have knocked down a good dinner as we passed through the flight. In Barbary, Niebuhr tells us, they are boiled and dried in the sun upon the house-top before eaten; and some travellers who have tasted

them affirm the flavour to be that of the *Sardine* of the Baltic.

Every night during our passage between Cairo and Suez we beheld with astonishment and admiration the splendid comet at that time visible throughout Europe. Our Arabs regarded it with superstitious awe, saying that doubtless it would be followed by a grievous plague, for that once before, an unusual sign in the heavens of the same character proved the forerunner of a fearful visitation from this dreadful scourge. A friend we met at Suez brought out his astronomical instruments the evening before we started for Sinai, to take observations on this celestial phenomenon, but the night unfortunately proved overcast.

The situation of our encampment at Suez was about a quarter of a mile to the north of the town, where we found, at the foot of the large mounds called *Tell Kolzum*, a spot well sheltered from the north and east, and about fifty yards from the waters of the gulf, in which we often bathed. The aspect of the town is most miserable. Its tumble-down houses are washed by the sea upon the eastern side, where the chief harbour is formed by the tongue of land on which the place is built. Here were moored several awkwardly constructed craft, with very high prows, giving them a peculiar and picturesque appearance enough. Excepting where the waves thus lave the wretched walls, one sun-scorched plain stretches far and wide, unre-

lieved by a blade of vegetation; and the unclothed crags, wild and desolate, of Jebel Atâkah and other heights as gloomy in their nakedness, bound the view upon the western shore of the gulf.

The day we arrived here being Saturday, we concluded to rest the Sunday and be off again on Monday: but on the morning of the latter day we altered our intention, and, taking ship, steered to a promontory on the western coast, fourteen miles below Suez, named Râs' Atâkah, being the south-eastern foot of Jebel Atâkah. After rounding this point, a wide extended plain presented itself to us, forming the *Wady Tawârik*, which is, in fact, the mouth of a valley opening to the sea between Jebel Atâkah to the north and Jebel Deraj to the south. This is the spot generally supposed to be that from whence the flying host of Israel rushed forward to effect the passage of the sea before us, the waters of which, cloven by the hand of God, stood as a wall upon their right and left.

The sun now shone with intense fervour, and reflecting from the naked crags of Jebel Atâkah and the surrounding water, caused perspiration to drop from the brown cheeks of our boatmen, who, unaided by a breath of air, cheered their labours at the oar by a wild and most peculiar chant. At each stroke, one taking the lead, cried out a word of two or three syllables, probably the name of some patron saint, whilst the others did not take up the same cry, but each

one of his own, as the preceding one died away, thus making a sort of chanting dialogue, at every successive stroke a fresh man taking the lead. The oars they use are very clumsy, and of a most primitive form, being nothing more than a pole, with a flat round board nailed on at the bottom in a very simple manner; and, from their form, they would, in a swell, prove utterly useless, I should imagine. Ships of considerable burthen trade between Suez and Jeddah, bringing coffee and such like merchandise; but they do not come within the shoals which lie about two miles below Suez, except when, after being first unloaded, they are towed up by boats to the port for repair, or to be laid up for a season. The above shoals stretch right across to the eastern shore, the Asiatic coast presenting there, for many miles inland, a flat desert plain of loose sand; from which circumstance the shallows in the gulf must yearly increase, sweeping winds, particularly those violent north-easters which are prevalent here at times, carrying the surface of the desert continually into the sea. The opposite, or western coast, being walled in by the Jebel Atâkah and Jebel Deraj ranges, accounts for the African side of the water being deeper far than the other.

Landing at the northern point of the spreading mouth of Wady Tawârik, we walked across beds of shells of many different species, amongst which were several sorts of *cowries*. Such vast beds of

dead shells washed up by the sea, line this part of the coast as far as we explored it. Amongst the rocks along the shore we observed also great numbers of an echinus, clothed with black spines, and also saw floating on the sea, many of a species of animal of a substantial glutinous substance, very transparent, and white, and circular, but flat in shape, which, doubtless, are the mysterious things mentioned by Don Juan de Castro, in his relation of the voyage of Don Stefano de Gama, in 1546, where he says, speaking of the sea between Toro and Suez,—"About this place I saw certain *sea-foams*, otherwise called *evil waters*, the largest I had ever seen, being as large as a target, of a whitish dun colour. These do not pass lower than Toro, but below that there are infinite small ones, which, like the others, are bred in and go about the sea." This remark of his has been supposed to be an obscure allusion to waterspouts, but surely this animal production is much more likely to be referred to. One very large one looking remarkably cool and tempting, like a noble mass of blanc-mange, I could not refrain from indulging my cannibal propensities upon it, by cutting off a slice with the bayonet of my pistol; but it proved too briny to please me exactly, though otherwise tasteless.

About one hundred yards above the margin of the sea commenced a kind of salt marsh, being a bed of muddy sand with a strip of tamarisk and coarse-tufted grass clothing the edges of a narrow

channel of water intersecting it. Taking off my shoes and stockings, I gave them to one of the boatmen to carry; but I soon was compelled to put them on again, finding the sand strewed in some parts with the shell called vulgarly the "thorny woodcock," the sharp-pointed prickles of which form by no means a pleasant carpet for bare feet. I expected here to find some curious birds, but saw nothing but an individual "godwit," which had much the appearance of the common grey one, and was too wild to allow me to approach it. A little further south, the whole of the strand between this marsh and the base of the mountains was covered with blocks of rock, apparently rolled down by violent convulsions of former ages, or, perhaps, partly by late earthquakes. Amongst these rocks I observed a kind of lark, of a reddish sandy colour, of which I obtained a specimen. This bird when in the air makes a short, but loud, whistling note.* The

* The beautiful manner in which the plumage of birds are adapted to their localities, I have before noticed. In this species it is wonderfully exemplified, its plumage assimilating exactly with the very shade of colour of the sand in the places in which I have met with it: but it is not only so with birds, but the lizards, serpents, and other animals of the desert, are nearly all of a hue agreeing with that of the sandy surface. Every traveller in these regions must be struck with this wise ordination of the Great Spirit as regards the inferior creation. How often in traversing these, the most desert portions of God's earth, is one moved to cry in the words of the great Philosopher, "I had rather believe all the fables of the Legend, and the Talmud, and Alcoran, than believe that this universal frame is without a mind!"

mountains of Africa at this point present lofty frowning precipices utterly unscaleable; and where less precipitous, they are of so rugged an aspect that the toil of ascending or traversing them must be very great. We did not arrive again at Suez until nearly ten at night, for but little air arose to waft us on, and the heavy lateen sail raised to catch that little, rather slackened by its dead-weight the speed of the boat than assisted it. In fact, we should have proceeded much more quickly if we had had no sail at all, as after sticking that up the crew lay sprawling in the bottom of the craft, instead of labouring at the oar, until we forced them to work, that we might move on in a rather more satisfactory manner.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUEZ TO SINAI.

Exodus of the Israelites.—Ancient Canal between Head of the Gulf of Suez and Nile.—*Ayun Mûsa.*—Alarm an Arab Woman.—Wady-Sûdr.—Peculiar Bird.—Terabin Arabs.—The Mountain of Pharaoh's Bath.—Bitter Waters of *Marah.*—Wearied Pilgrims.—Wady Ghûrundel.—Shrub *Ghûrkud.*

REGARDING the point at which the children of Israel performed the passage of the Red Sea, Dr. Robinson, in his "Biblical Researches," strongly advocates the opinion (mooted several ages back) that the passage took place across the shoals, a slight space south of Suez; but whether the arguments of the learned Professor in favour of that supposition are sufficiently sound to shake the assumption, more generally admitted, that the more probable site of the passage is at the Wady Tawârik, which we had this day visited, may still be questioned.

Supposing Rameses to have been situated, as Dr. Robinson has placed it, at the northern shore of the Bitter Lakes, thirty or thirty-five miles from the head of the Gulf of Suez, the host of Israel, making forced marches, as they naturally

would, knowing the uncertain character of Pharaoh, and fearing his repenting their release, might, with ease, have reached "Etham in the edge of the wilderness," near the head of the gulf, on the second day; when, "turning" (as recorded in the second verse of the fourteenth chapter of Exodus), at the command of the Lord, instead of going on in the direct course, so as to round the head to the eastern shore, they went down the western coast, and skirting the foot of Jebel Atâkah, found themselves, after a long day's march upon the open plain of Wady Tawârik, a march of eighteen miles perhaps from the head of the gulf; for they had, doubtless, pressed on, alarmed by rumours of Pharaoh's intended pursuit. Not that the Bible narrative of this march necessarily confines it decidedly to three days, as Dr. Robinson seems to imagine: neither surely is the time they spent before arriving here to be curtailed, upon the supposition that *want of water* would have prohibited a longer interval. For the children of Israel "came out with a high hand," and "went up *harnessed* out of the land of Egypt." The Egyptians had "*lent unto them such things as they required*, and they spoiled the Egyptians." It is not to be presumed, therefore, that they were without plenty of beasts of burthen to carry water skins, and other necessaries, for the journey they had before them. It is also to be considered that the extent

of cultivation was doubtless much greater then than at present, and that the first two days, at all events, they were passing along the shores of the Bitter Lakes, and pursuing a course which we are not sure was not, even at that time, enriched by the waters of the canal cut from the head of the gulf to the Nile, though a later date is generally assigned to that work. May not this assumption overthrow the argument of impossibility, raised by Dr. Robinson, as to Pharaoh's pursuing them on this route with his horses? for if any supply of water was necessary to be taken for his cavalry, it would only be for the last day's march; and probably not even that, for Migdol and Pi-hahiroth would not, surely, be without wells in their neighbourhood. And let it be observed that all about this tract, now desert, are petrified remains of trees, of which we have no certainty that they are pre-Adamite; and where trees grew, doubtless water was at hand. Admitting that the host might then have arrived at the mouth of Wady Tawârik by this route, (which, considering the probable situation of the land of Ghoshen, may, perhaps, be reasonably preferred to a more southern one, which they might have taken if coming from the direction of Cairo or Memphis;) how superlatively applicable was the exclamation, "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in!" The wild and desolate range of Jebel Deraj opposed a savage

barrier to their further progress on the south; behind, were rugged sterile mountains, with a difficult pass, only leading back again into the heart of that country from which they were fleeing; upon their left, or north, was Jebel Atâkah, as desolate and forbidding as Jebel Deraj on their right, or south; along that narrow track of sterile desert, at the base of these stern ramparts, straitened by the sea on one side, and the precipices of Jebel Atâkah on the other, came thundering on the chariots and the horsemen of their persecutor in full pursuit, totally debarring them from a retreat. Well might the children of Israel, thus entangled, cry unto the Lord, and be sore afraid!

Having brought them thus far, let us consider the miraculous passage itself, discussing which, Dr. Robinson seems to me at the same time, both to admit and to decry the intervention of miracle; admitting a miraculous adaptation of the laws of nature to produce the retiring of the waters, but confining the width of the passage produced to a given extent, in order to fall in with *the natural ebb of the tide;* as if the Power that made the sea dry land, must have been ruled by this, and might not have rendered the passage of an indefinite width. Again—Dr. Robinson, after stating, as in the Bible narrative, that "the Lord caused the sea to *go* by a strong east wind," (preferring, however, the word "*flow*

out," instead of the strict interpretation of the Hebrew word, "*go,*") takes the liberty (upon the ground of the "*Hebrew phraseology being indefinite,*") of *shifting* the wind to the *north*-east, instead of *east*, as given in our translation; because by blowing from the former quarter it would act upon the ebb tide of the northern extremity of the Gulf, so as to suit his argument, by driving out the water and leaving the shallows below Suez dry, which an *east* wind would not do. Then, in order to do away with the difficulty of the word "*wall,*" as relating to the character which the waters assumed on each side of the passing host, he translates it "*defence;*" the waters thus forming a *defence*, were left in the deeps on each side of the shallows: but he does not touch upon those expressions in the song of Moses: "With the blast of thy nostril the waters were *gathered together:* the floods *stood upright* as a HEAP, and the depths were congealed in the *heart* of the sea." That of David, too, 2 Sam. xxii. 16: "The channels of the sea were opened," infers, surely, a miraculous drying up of the bed of the waters, and not merely a usual, or unusual, ebbing of the tide. It does not appear to me, therefore, that the hypothesis of a passage through the sea opposite to Wady Tawârik is rendered untenable by Dr. Robinson's reasoning on this head.

The next point he argues on, is the "interval of time" in which the passage was effected; and taking

the liberty (surely without just grounds) of limiting the time that the wind was acting upon the ebb tide to "three or four hours at the most," and assuming the Israelites to have set off about the middle watch, or midnight, of that *same night;* he goes on to state, that "*before the morning watch* they had probably completed the passage," as "the Egyptians were destroyed before morning appeared." But upon consulting this portion of the narrative in Exodus xiv., may it not be read so as to allow them *a day and part of a night* to perform the passage in, being the day and night *ensuing* "ALL *that night*" during which the waters were dividing? This space of time, according to Niebuhr's estimation that the distance over the sea, from *Wady Tawârik*, is about twelve miles, would be about the period they would probably have taken to march across: for who can believe that two millions of souls, besides flocks and herds, could in the time allowed by Dr. Robinson, have completed the passage, even at the narrowest part, by Suez? Moreover, the space of sea passed must have been great; as the Egyptian host, "*all* the chariots of Egypt, and *all* Pharaoh's horsemen," were evidently in the passage together, and apparently at the same time with a great portion, if not the whole, of the Israelitish host; which never could have been the case in a strait a mile, or even three miles, across, with the mere breadth allowed by Dr. Robinson to the

passage dried up for them, admitting, according to his estimation, no more than a thousand abreast to pass. Perhaps, then, his argument on this point will not be deemed to weaken the *Wady Tawárik* hypothesis. As for myself, as I stood upon the vast open space of that Wady, and beheld beetling above us mighty walls of impassable mountains, totally devoid of vegetation, shutting us in behind, and the foaming sea in front, I saw, as it were, the multitude of Israel waiting here in fearful expectation, without hope of escape, except by Divine aid, which, afforded by a rushing wind, "a blast from the nostrils of the Lord," cleft the deep, and made the floods stand upright as a *heap*, and "*as a wall* on their right hand and on their left." Onward rushed the Israelitish host (perhaps a thousand abreast, or perhaps twenty thousand, for we have no clue to limit the width of the passage); the clangour of the fierce Egyptian was at their rear, "even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen," who, in the "morning watch" *of the night after the cleaving of the waters*, having attained the "midst of the sea," beheld the children of Israel just arrived, and partly landed on the opposite shore; when "the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." Then, their craven hearts trembling within them, the cry was raised, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them!" but Moses stretching forth his hand, the sea covered

them, "they sank as lead in the mighty waters." The rugged range of Jebel er-Râhah* echoed and re-echoed with the shout of Israel, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea;"—"The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name;"—"The people shall hear and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Palestina."

But whether Dr. Robinson's reasonings are the most conclusive as to the true site of the miraculous passage, or those urged for the old site of Wady Tawârik, is little matter: it never can be definitively settled as to the exact point where this marvellous event took place, all traces being lost of those ancient towns named in the Scripture narrative.

The wrath of the old Portuguese traveller in 1546, Don Juan de Castro, seems to have been greatly excited on this point, and he observes, "I found the ebb and flow of the sea between Toro and Suez quite conformable with other parts of the coast, neither higher nor lower, whence appears the falsehood of some writers, who affirm that no path was opened through this sea for the Israelites by miracle, but merely that the sea ebbed so much in this place, that they waited the ebb and passed over dry." The spot which tradition seemed to point to most favourably in that day was sixty miles or more below Suez, and Don Juan refers to it as being the true place without doubt. "The

* The range east of the head of the Gulf of Suez, and forming, at that point, the western barrier to the great desert, el-Tîh.

fleet cast anchor at Korondel, sixty miles from Suez, at which place Moses divided the sea, by stretching out his rod, and Pharaoh was drowned with all his host; and," says he, "if they had crossed so near the top of the gulf as some aver, the Egyptians, instead of following them through, would have rushed round and headed them."

There were several vessels in harbour at Suez at the time we were there. It is at this port that those intended for the navigation of the Red Sea are chiefly built; the timber for the purpose being imported from other countries.

Egypt has often felt, and had reason to lament, the necessity she is under of thus importing foreign timber; her own regions neither being adapted by nature or in extent to present her with those noble forests that are found in other lands. She is either a garden, or a naked desert, presenting the former character within the boundaries of the inundations, and the latter immediately beyond those limits. Cultivation, floods, and absence of rain, forbid the growth of timber to any extent, and sands devoid of nourishment and moisture do so totally; therefore it is that none of those vast forest-clothed tracks appear within her confines, which mark elsewhere spaces left to nature. And for the same reason it was that, of old, the trees of Phœnicia, of Palestine, and Syria, were floated to her ports, and that the wooded Cyprus proved so valuable an acquisition to the kingdom of Ptolemy, the son of

Lagus. Neither did that timber ever grow in Egypt, of which was constructed the huge ship of forty banks of oars, bearing a crew of above four thousand souls upon the bosom of the Nile, when Euergetes sat upon the Egyptian throne.*

In the fifteenth century, the dark forests of Dalmatia resounded with the strokes of the axe, in order that the Soldan of the Mamalouks might launch a fleet upon the Red Sea to war against the Portuguese, whose thriving commerce with India, after the discovery by the daring Vasco de Gama (second only to the immortal Genoese adventurer in enterprize) of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, awoke the jealousy and well-grounded fear, both of the great merchant republic of Venice and of the Egyptians, lest this new gate to India should deprive them of that power and wealth accruing from the monopoly of the eastern commerce which they had so long enjoyed, and of which Egypt had for above two thousand years been the grand channel. At this day the woods of Caramania, Anatolia, and the islands of the Archipelago, are ransacked to supply the kingdom of Mehemet Ali with fuel and timber,

* This ship is described as having been fifty-eight feet in breadth, and sixty feet in the height of its forecastle above water, whilst some of the oars were above fifty feet in length. How the numerous banks of oars could have been brought into play, seems almost incomprehensible, considering the massive weight such length of oar must have required.

a portion of which, shipped up the Nile to Cairo, ultimately reaches Suez.

The enormous rudders of the craft at this port, sometimes with a beam of twenty feet in length, struck us as they have done many former travellers. Both Niebuhr and Pococke mention them, the latter observing that the manner of fastening them to a post near the stern, and the particular mode of unlashing them from that post in case of storm, and letting the ship drive so that the helm plays at will, illustrates the passage in St. Paul's voyage, Acts xxvii. 40, "And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder-bands, and hoisted up the main sail to the wind;" for, according to the minute description of this traveller, the loosening of the rudder-bands in the modern vessels also gives play to the sail.

On Tuesday, the 14th of March, we left our encampment at Suez, and without the slightest regret on my part, for it is a sorry town indeed, and as melancholy an exhibition of dirt, poverty, and desolation, as I have happened to meet with in the course of my travels. Moreover we found here that there were "lice in all our quarters," which distressed us exceedingly, and led me to cast a portion of my wardrobe into the sea; a very impolitic measure, as the sand itself begetting these noisome insects, throughout the desert, we were, for the future, of

necessity a prey to their hosts, and thus might have sacrificed all our wardrobe to no avail.

Upon the mounds of Tell Kolzum, around the northern base of which we now wound our way, there are at present no further remains of the city which once stood there than fragments of pottery and bricks, being the remnant probably of that Turkish fort, a portion of which was visible in Niebuhr's time.* Whether here is the site of Migdol, Pihahiroth, Arsinoe, or Cleopatris, who can say? but when the waters of the gulf flowed up at the back of this position, as probably they once did, making a secure harbour for shipping, doubtless a flourishing city was here.

Instead of crossing the water at Suez to the opposite coast, as most travellers do, we rounded the northern head of the gulf, and saw by the way some slight appearance of embankments, the supposed tracks of that ancient canal which formerly connected the Nile with the Red Sea, and the

* In the relation of the voyage from Goa to Suez of Don Stefano de Gama in 1546, Suez is spoken of as presenting much the same wretched aspect it does at present; and, referring apparently to the spot whereon the remains mentioned by Niebuhr stood, he says, "There still remains a small castle, without which are two high ancient towers, the remains of the City of Heroes, which stood here in old times." He then proceeds, "But on this point of land where the creek enters, there is a great and mighty bulwark of modern structure, which defends the entry of the creek," &c.

formation of which is by some considered to have been one of the boasted exploits of that great hero of antiquity, to whom related the proud inscription carved upon the base of a gigantic statue which once adorned the magnificent sepulchral temple of Thebes:—"I am Osymandes, King of kings; if any one desire to know what prince I am, let him excel my exploits." To that Osymandes, or Sesostris, however, the learned Dr. Hales does not attribute this great work, connecting the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, but rather refers it to Pharaoh-nechoh, the successor of Psammiticus, and slayer of Josiah, King of Judah, as recorded in 2 Kings xxiii.:—"In his days Pharaoh-nechoh, King of Egypt, went up against the King of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and King Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him." Six hundred and nineteen years before our era that Pharaoh ruled Egypt. To him the historian of Halicarnassus also yields the fame of projecting this canal; and, speaking of its length, states that it was equal to four days' voyage, whilst its width was sufficient to allow two triremes to float abreast upon its waters. One hundred and twenty thousand Egyptians perished in the laborious undertaking; and had not an oracle admonished Nechoh against the perfecting of it, thousands more of groaning slaves might have been added to the list of those sacrificed by that energetic

king, whose contempt for the lives of his subjects has been so well imitated by the present tenant of the throne of Egypt, in the prosecution of public works beneath her burning sun. An oracle proceeding from the bosoms of his oppressed subjects may some day arrest his progress, as did that in Nechoh's time which anathematized the progress of the Suez canal.

Herodotus also tells us that the hand which completed this great work was that of Darius, who slew Smerdis Magus, and gained the crown of Persia from his brother conspirator by the ingenuity of his groom Abares, who, causing his master's horse to neigh within a given time, won him the kingdom. Others assert that the Ptolemies found the canal incomplete, and that so it remained until Amru, the Lieutenant in Egypt of the pious Caliph Omar, opened it A.D. 635. Darius, the Persian, is related to have given up the project, lest Egypt should be inundated, as he found, on taking the level, that the sea of Arabia lay higher than the land of Egypt; but Ptolemy the Second afterwards "contrived, by means of sluices, to regulate the water;" and to that ruler of Egypt, then, the actual perfecting of the communication seems most justly to be attributed.

That the riches of the Delta, were, by means of this communication with the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, for ages poured forth upon the bosom of the Arabian Gulf, may be gleaned from the

statements of numerous ancient historians, from the age of Herodotus to that of the Sicilian Diodorus. This fact alone speaks magnificently for the greatness of early Egypt, and denotes the immense superiority of its population and extent of cultivation to what it boasts at present. For a high state of commercial prosperity must have urged so great an undertaking, and to carry it out considerable science was required in the introduction of locks, sluices, and other artful means to remedy the danger of inundation, on account of the superior elevation of the water of the Gulf of Suez above that of the Nile, the knowledge of which, as before related, prevented the earliest projectors of the scheme from actually connecting them, fearing to cut that barrier of sand placed by nature at the head of the gulf to restrain its flood. Again, when once the project was completed, even so far as Darius, the Persian, carried it out, the presence of many thousand residents in the vicinity of its whole course must have been requisite to maintain it in a navigable state; and to sustain those thousands, the neighbourhood of that canal from Kolzum, at the head of the gulf, to the point of the junction of the cutting with the Nile, must have been cultivated to a great extent. But ancient Egypt has dwindled away; the Bubastic channel of the Nile has failed; the ever-drifting surface of the desert, encroaching

age after age, has choked up and wholly overthrown that work, which for above a thousand years successively excited the energy and attention of Pharaohs, Persian despots, Ptolemies, and Cæsars. Its track now winds through desert plains totally devoid of vegetation, excepting towards the Nile extremity, where a small strip of the "best of the land of Rameses" still retains its verdure.

The French, under Napoleon, who surveyed with attention the isthmus of Suez, and especially the line of the ancient canal, calculated that the cost of re-opening it would be about 700,000*l.* English. Whether they calculated the sacrifice of life that would also be required, I know not, but taking into consideration the present aspect of the country to carry it through, it would certainly be very great. If the working of it was confided to Mehemet Ali, as of necessity it must be, if set on foot, it would be completed if possible; but the tragic scene of cutting the Mahmoudieh canal would be acted over again with redoubled horrors: for the former traversed a cultivated country, where nourishment was easily to be obtained, (though it was not duly supplied to the unfortunate labourers,) whereas the latter line lies over the naked desert, where the poor Fellahs would be fully exposed to the scorching sun, hot winds, and starvation; so that the 12,000 victims of the Mahmoudieh canal would probably hail in Paradise 20,000 or more fellow-coun-

trymen from the Suez line—an awful host to welcome his Highness the Pasha in the realms of bliss.

At the head of the Gulf of Suez is a vast plain, strewed with large and small masses of a talc-like substance, which exfoliates with great facility when handled. The rugged range of Er-Rahah bounded the horizon on our left, as proceeding down the eastern shore of the gulf we at last reached "*Ayún Músa*, or the Wells of Moses," the termination of our day's journey. The descent into the wady, where are these springs, is sudden, and from it the view is curious, for it is in fact a vast plain, rather than a wady, that you behold from thence, studded with isolated sand hills of the most peculiar forms, gradually becoming closer together, and more lofty, until mingled with the Er-Rahah mountains. Amongst the "Springs of Moses" are many palm-trees, one rather a picturesque production, but all evidently much dissatisfied with the situation allotted them: for instead of a graceful stem bearing aloft its plumed head, you see here (excepting the one referred to above) only thick masses of foliage, forming low unsightly bushes, with sometimes two or three stems, stunted and broken, rising to the height of a few feet, springing in a deformed manner from the same root; whilst around may be seen other isolated stems, wholly destitute of leaves and much burnt by fires lighted near them by wanderers, who have here encamped to drink the water of the springs; water

which none but wanderers in these desert regions would think of drinking, for it is terribly brackish, and in appearance more nearly allied to ink than to water, and, being of a warm temperature, it is rendered wondrous sickly to the taste. It proves prejudicial to some, but did not disagree with me. I counted altogether nine of these springs, some of which were pretty plentifully supplied with water, but others dry. They are chiefly on mounds with little marshy spaces around them, and Pococke speaks of camels being swallowed up in these little quagmires; but I doubt whether any that we saw were large enough to swallow a gnat, much less a camel. As to their depth, we were not unfortunate enough to test it.

Near one of the springs is a small stone building in ruins. With what view it might have been originally built, it is difficult to say, perhaps merely to protect the spring, which now rises outside of it; the basin within the walls having, probably, become choked up by the falling of the neglected building, thus causing the water to burst forth afresh through the sandy soil at the base of the mound on which it stands. There is a small Arab hut a short distance to the eastward of this spot, with a bit of ground attached sowed with corn, and defended by a hedge of a yellow-flowering shrub, then in full bloom, and very gay. Shooting at a bird upon the margin of a little pool near this desolate abode, I was both astonished and

alarmed by a Bedouin female jumping up from behind some bushes, who, uttering a cry of fright, rushed into the hut, leaving me to pick up my bird and be off, perfectly satisfied that her cry could only proceed from the unexpected and startling salute I had honoured her with.

From Ayûn Mûsa the Gulf of Suez looks exceedingly narrow, (being, in fact, not more than from ten to twelve miles across,) and the broad sweep of Wady Tawârik, on the opposite coast, is very visible. Dr. Robinson, speaking of the spring of Marah, (which Burckhardt considers to be that now known as the fountain of Hawarah, some distance farther south,) observes, "After having passed the Red Sea, the Israelites would naturally supply themselves from the fountains of Nâba and Ayûn Mûsa." Whether this is in accordance with the Bible narrative may be a matter of doubt: by that narrative one is led to *infer* that they found no water from the time they landed on the Asiatic side until they came to Marah, and if they had watered at these springs, is it not probable, from the remarkable number of them, and the trees which evidently once flourished around, that they might have been mentioned in the same manner as those at Elim? Neither would their travelling for three days without finding water be so noted, as they would doubtless have laid in a stock if they had landed and drank at the springs of Ayûn Mûsa. It took us two days' journey of

hardly eight hours a-day actual travelling, to arrive at the supposed spring of Marah, after leaving Ayûn Mûsa, our rate never averaging more than two and a-half miles the hour; therefore the same space could hardly have afforded "a good *three* days' march" even for the mighty host of Israel, as Dr. Robinson supposes it would.

Our next encampment, after leaving the Wells of Moses, was in a broad wady called Wady Sûdr, where I shot two specimens of that peculiar bird called the "Bifasciated lark," the *Certhilauda bifasciata* of Gould, and figured in his "Birds of Europe," as having been killed in Provence and in Sicily, though strictly a native of Africa.* Both during the night and by day was I attracted by its beautiful note. Rising in the air twenty feet or more, it would sing with a clear loud whistle of the greatest softness, and then folding its wings, drop like a stone, settling either on the top of one of the bushes of "*rhetem*," or white broom, or upon the tufts of tamarisk, which are plentiful in this wady. When pursued, it ran with the greatest swiftness until out of shot, or, if hard pressed, rose, and taking a short flight, would then settle again. Whilst on the ground, its sandy colour rendered it very difficult to discern, and the velocity of its movements more so to shoot; but at last, after a long chase, I succeeded in obtaining the only two

* For the name of this bird I have to thank Mr. Yarrell, the celebrated ornithologist.

I saw. One of our servants, firing a pistol off this evening by way of amusement in the dark, nearly shot one of the party wandering about the sands, who returned fully convinced that a son of the desert had attempted his life. Some of the peaks of Er-Rahah, seen from this wady, are very striking. Dr. Robinson tells us that in this neighbourhood are the head-quarters of the *Terabin* Arabs, who dwell in the mountains of Er-Rahah, and claim the whole territory from opposite Suez to Wady Ghurundel, their whole number, by his account, not amounting to above forty families, though the tribe of which they are a colony is rich and large, inhabiting the country south of Gaza.

The following day we traversed many wadys, the principal of which were "Wady Warden," and "Wady el Amarah." A fine ridge of mountain, far away to the south, named Jebel Hummam, excited our admiration; its western extremity rising in a bold and rugged peak. This is the mountain, I presume, which Pococke calls *Jebel-Hamam Pharaone*, (the Mountain of Pharaoh's Bath,) wherein he states that there is a grotto by the sea-side leading to a source of very hot water, and that people have died, who have gone as far as the water, by a vapour that extinguishes the lights. Moreover, he tells us the water is exceedingly nauseous, but yet beneficial for some complaints, for which the invalids "have it poured over them first without the passage of the grotto, and then within, to make

them sweat more plentifully; this they do only once, and for forty days eat nothing but oil, honey, and bread made without salt, and drink only water with dates steeped in it."

This night we encamped near the fountain of Hawârah, the supposed Well of Marah, a mere hole on a sand-hill. About it are many bushes of the shrubby plant "*ghurkûd*," which is exceedingly common in the desert near all springs. The berry of it, Burckhardt suggests, was used by Moses for sweetening the bitter waters; but, according to Robinson, the season would not have arrived for the fruit when the Israelites were there. At Ayûn Mûsa I gathered one berry, but it was evidently quite out of season: its proper month for ripening is said to be June. There was now in the "Well of Marah" but very little water, of which, being somewhat before the rest of the party, I was the first to taste. It has a most strong medicinal bitter, making it hardly drinkable, yet it looks clear and good. Above the spring are two palm bushes, walking up to one of which, I was rather startled by seeing three wild-looking men stretched upon the ground, apparently in sleep, who, upon my moving away, however, rose, and, coming towards me, made signs that they were suffering from thirst, upon which I led them to the water, which they had evidently not discovered. Hardly a cup-full of water was there, but greedily did they scoop it out and drink all they

could get. Then the bitter struck their palate, and they made wonderful grimaces; neither should I imagine the after effect of so nauseous a draft to have proved very beneficial. These wretched beings were pilgrims from Mecca, on their way to Cairo; but like many of those who go that dread journey, it may be doubted if they ever saw Cairo again, for they looked worn out with fatigue, and fearful was the journey betwixt them and that city. One of them having in his belt a curious instrument, something like a very long handled spoon of dark wood, with a solid bowl cut and carved about very handsomely and of excellent polish, I inquired of him by signs the use of this mysterious article. He forthwith drew it out, and, passing it over his shoulder, commenced luxuriously scratching his back with it, so that I went away moved with envy.

These were not the first pilgrims we had seen in distress for that very morning, before starting from our encampment in Wady Sûdr, three worn out wretches crawled up to our tents, and, craving a little water, said they had neither eaten nor drank for three days; nor did their appearance belie their statement. The scanty portions of biscuits and water we could spare them seemed thrown away, for they never could survive the journey before them. Mr. Woodhead offering them some money, they refused it as perfect dross in their situation. We had also met on the way one regular pilgrim caravan, formed in

part by many women on camels, amongst whom, in a strange kind of wooden lattice-work box was said to be a Princess, who had travelled in this manner all the way from Morocco to Mecca, and so far back again. Many miles in the wake of this train were those who, weak with travelling, lagged behind, dragging themselves on in the most pitiful manner, some of whom cried aloud to us for water, then with hollow voices enquired the distance to Suez. Death overtakes many on the way, and when they feel that such is their destiny, bowing to fate, they scoop a shallow hole in the sand, lie down in that their grave, and die. The sweeping winds howl their requiem, and soon cover them with a shroud of sand; the fellow-pilgrim collects a few stones to mark the spot where the toils of his brother sufferer terminated; and others, following at different periods, seeing this humble memorial, generally contribute a stone or two. Thus in time those little mounds are formed nigh the margin of the desert track, which the traveller every now and then beholds and wonders what they indicate. Where they do not mark the grave of the devotee, they are probably raised where a murder or robbery, or some bloody contention has taken place; as is the case at one place upon the way we had passed from Cairo to Suez, the site of a sanguinary fight between some Arabs and a caravan proceeding that route.

At Marah our tents were pitched under the

shelter of a sand-hill, the well bearing north-east of us about a quarter of a mile. Near us were some rugged hills of slight elevation, where I observed a great quantity of a kind of crystal, and wood petrified in a peculiar manner, there being just below the surface apparently stumps of trees perfectly fossilized, and having much the appearance of asbestos, of a white colour, and breaking either in threads, or in small hexagonal pieces of about two inches long when handled.

Leaving Marah about nine o'clock the following morning we stopped to refresh ourselves in the *Wady Ghurundel*, considered the Elim of the Scriptures, where were "Twelve wells and three-score and ten palm trees." Wild and savage is the scenery in this vicinity, rugged mountains of lime stone formation surrounding you on all sides, whilst here and there towering masses of rock laid bare by the winds rushing through the mountain ravines and carrying away the sand from their very foundations, stand toppling in isolated grandeur. The wady itself is a romantic pass, adorned with many bushes of tamarisk and several palms, but at this day hardly "three-score and ten;" neither are there twelve springs of water at present. One little puddle there was, at which, arriving rather late, I found some polluting Arabs washing their limbs. I nevertheless drank of it, being very thirsty and much fatigued, and the water in our skins very low and bad from shaking.

About this spring were numbers of a peculiar species of hornet. The only living thing besides that seemed to haunt the spot was a vulture which wheeled around over our heads. This bird loves the deep silence of the desert during the breeding season, and finds midst the mountain crags, undisturbed localities for nidification.

Burckhardt mentions the water of this spring as turning bitter if kept a night. We did not observe there much of the shrub *ghurkud*, which he mentions as particularly plentiful at this spot, and as not being so at Marah; but it seemed to me exactly *vice versâ*. He says it is called by the Arabs *homra*, and "the fruit resembles a ripe gooseberry in taste;" and it is in speaking of this valley, that he makes the observation, "Might not the berry of this shrub have been used by Moses to sweeten the waters of Marah? The words in Exodus xv. 25, are 'And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.' The Arabic translation of this passage gives a different, and perhaps more correct reading, 'And the Lord guided him to a tree, of which he threw something into the water, which then became sweet.'" We tried the effect of soaking some of the branches of this shrub in the bitter water of Marah for a night, but the desired change was by no means produced; and apparently Burckhardt's hypothesis as to Moses's using the berry of it for that purpose, is pretty well over-

thrown by Robinson's observation as to the season of its being ripe.

In the octavo translation of Laborde's work, published in London in 1836, is a curious error made by the editor, who confounds the *Wady Garandal* in the neighbourhood of Petra, which has an embouchure in *Wady Araba*, with this *Wady Ghurundel* on the way to Sinai from Cairo, (thus placing the Elim of Scripture in a very unaccountable situation;) and introduces a long quotation from Burckhardt relating to the latter wady, where Laborde evidently refers to the former.

CHAPTER XX.

SUEZ TO SINAI.

Mound of "Abu Zennah."—Wady Useit.—The Bride of Themmân.—Wâdy Shubeikeh.—Jerboa.—Thunder-storm.—Cold Nights.—Wady Nûsb.—Ascent of Sûrabit el Khâdim.—Egyptian remains.—Sinaitic Inscriptions.—Bedouin Shepherdess.—Pass of Nukb Hawy.—Horeb.—Convent of Sinai.—Ascent of Sinai.—View from summit.—Râs-es-Susafeh.

AFTER leaving the Wady Ghurundel, we drew near the "Wady Suweileh," and on the way observed the mound mentioned by Robinson, as upon which his Arabs "kicked dirt, crying out 'Feed the hôrse of Abu Zennah.'" Our Arabs neglected the ceremony; neither could we gather any tradition regarding the place, further than its being the site of some peculiar event. In "Wady Useit" we tarried a short half hour beneath the delightful shade of some trees, to eat hard eggs and biscuit which nothing but soaking in water would render penetrable, hungry as we were. At this spot a hole had been scooped in the sand, but the little water in it was very foul and scarce. In the course of the journey beyond this wady, arriving at a heap of stones beneath a shelving

sand-bank, the Arabs ran forward, and tearing some strips from their garments, hung them beside many which had been placed before upon the jutting parts of the bank over the mound, then taking stones they cast them on the spot in honour of the "Bride of Themmân." Whereupon, moved by the spirit of gallantry, we also took stones and cast them there, without the slightest conception who this Bride of Themmân might be, though, doubtless, some lovely Bedouin, who by some romantic accident drooped in the "howling wilderness" and died, adding another to the host of houris disporting beneath the Tuba tree of happiness!

We pitched our tents that night in the "Wady Shubeikeh," at the entrance of a small gorge in the mountains, coming to an abrupt termination in a remarkable hollow, bearing the appearance of an ancient quarry, and the stone of which was veined with rich jasper. The fine flower of the caper plant adorned the rocks of this wady, and sorely did I prick my fingers gathering specimens of it. Our servants carelessly pitched our tents almost in the bed of a watercourse, and a thunder-storm coming on, we much feared they would be washed away, but escaped fortunately from any very great annoyance, by digging trenches round them to carry off the water. Our Greek courier, whom we had taken in Elias's place, became here quite ill, from the effects of a foot blistered by the heat of

the sun, into which inflammation had fallen, as a punishment, I concluded, for drinking all our hoarded brandy. We did not, therefore, view his sufferings with those tender feelings we might otherwise have encouraged for his benefit.

One spot in this wady near the encampment was honeycombed with the holes of the jerboa, but though I lay up at night for them, not one appeared. My attempts to dig them out also failed, for, in their cunning, they had chosen a spot full of the roots of the *rhetem*, so that, with a tent-peg for a spade, it proved both laborious and unprofitable sport. Water might have brought them forth, but their ramifying homes would have consumed a great quantity, and man has not enough to satisfy himself in those thirsty regions. Elias, our Greek, once told me that the jerboa is very good eating; and some deem it that animal referred to in Isaiah lxvi.:— "They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and *the mouse*, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord." Bruce, indeed, tells us, the word rendered in our translation of that passage the "mouse," is in the Arabic version "*jerboa;*" and he combats the opinion of many that the jerboa and the saphan of Scripture are the same, as the general characteristics of the former differ from the "coneys," (saphanim,) which "are but a feeble

folk; yet make they their houses in the rock:" which the jerboas never do, though they are a "feeble folk" enough. It does not, therefore, seem to rank amongst those "four things which are little upon the earth, but are exceeding wise," as I deemed it must, when casting down my tent-peg spade in despair of ever drawing one from its intricate subterraneous abodes.*

Some of the strokes of thunder were very loud this night. He who has heard the awful artillery of heaven echoed and re-echoed amongst such a chaos of rock-piled mountains, cleft and rent in deep and dark ravines;—he who has heard and felt the rushing of the mighty blast over unlimited wastes of barren sand, and its furious howlings in the bowels of the craggy heights, breaking that death-like silence which at other times pervades these desert regions, and making the very life-blood of man pause, arrested by the awful majesty of the Lord;—such a one will understand full well the awe-inspiring force of the words where Moses adjures the host of Israel not to forget the Lord their God, "who led them through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water;" and where he speaks to them in such awe-struck terms of "that great and terrible wilderness;" and "the

* Bruce deems the "saphan" of Scripture identical with the "ashkoko" of Abyssinia and Nubia.

waste howling wilderness." It is indeed in many parts a wilderness of thrilling wildness, of indescribable majesty, where the imagination is wholly lost and confounded—rocks hurled on rocks in strange confusion—here isolated masses, there terrace after terrace, alike barren and bare; not a vestige of life about them; strata heaved above strata without order; porphyry, limestone, and granite. You might well suppose yourself thrown on a planet not yet moulded by the Almighty hand for a habitable sphere, but still in chaos! Our sheikh to-day made an observation not to be expected from the mouth of a wild and thoughtless Bedouin—"Surely the great God, when he made the rest of the world, by some accident neglected this portion!" Such was the translation given to me by our Greek, through whom I was talking with him of the beauty of other countries and the sterility of his own, of which latter truth one would have imagined him little aware.

We found the nights throughout our journey to Sinai very chill, and after this thunder-storm it was particularly so. Not being over-burthened with covering, I often found myself in the morning so stiff with cold as to require considerable stretching and shaking of limbs, to be sure that I still possessed them, before being again ready for action.

Wady Nûsb was our next station, where an enormous fragment of rock afforded shelter to our

tent; this rock was of a pyramidical shape, with the base somewhat rounded, resting on a flat stone of great dimensions: beneath its shelter have rested Niebuhr, Seetzen, Burckhardt, Laborde, and many other travellers of note. It is a wild spot; and the range of El-Tih, frowning nigh at hand, rose stern and rugged, precipice above precipice, giving those parts of it nearest to us a kind of terraced appearance. Its elevation is not very great, however, in this neighbourhood. Upon the nearest summits were some peculiar smooth tumulus-shaped mounds, contrasting curiously with the savage character of the mountains which they crowned. These spots seemed perfectly inaccessible; but even through my glass I could hardly fancy them natural, though doubtless they are. A beautiful hoopoe had found a quiet retreat here amongst some stunted mimosa bushes.

In the evening one of the Arabs went out to endeavour to kill a gazelle, there being a small wady, a likely feeding-place for them near the encampment; but he returned empty-handed.

We lay here all the following day, being Sunday, and, striking our tents early upon the Monday morning, after several hours of travel, winding through beautiful ravines, came to the foot of the mountain "Sûrabit el Khâdim," or, as Laborde calls it, "Sarbout el Cadem," whilst by Niebuhr it is denominated Jebel Mokatteb. The ascent of this mountain is by no means easy, being very

precipitous in some parts, and the track often winding along the edge of fearful chasms, down which, not without considerable risk of our own safety, we hurled, or rather rolled, with our united force, some tremendous masses of rock in order to enjoy the astonishing echo. Firing my gun, the report rattled from rock to rock throughout the sublime ravines. The shy gazelle, startled at the unaccustomed sound, so rudely disturbing its solitude, sniffed the wind, scampering off with its companions, doubtful where to turn, as mountain after mountain reverberated. There are many spots amongst these wild scenes where you are well repayed for throwing away a charge of powder for the sake of the magnificent echoes; and the Arabs finding how great a *penchant* I had for this effect, never failed to give me notice, shouting and screaming at the most likely spots to produce it.

Having arrived at the summit, we beheld before us numerous stones, with rounded tops, standing like church-yard monuments to the dead; approaching, we discovered them to be ornamented, in the most laborious manner, with beautifully-cut hieroglyphics. These stones are narrow, but of some nine or ten feet high, and, excepting two which are isolated, they stand together within a space of some seventy or eighty yards in length, by five-and-twenty or thirty in breadth: at one extremity of this ground was an ancient sepulchre, or some such excavation, into which we crawled,

and wherein one of the party found the remnant of a small statue. A fragment of the capital of a column, with the sculptured head of Isis upon it, exactly resembling that I have mentioned as to be seen amidst the ruins of Memphis, also lay here amongst the fallen blocks, of which there are many strewed around. Niebuhr is the true discoverer of these monuments, and the first who has attempted to describe them, and he, from their style, considered this the site of an Egyptian cemetery: but no satisfactory supposition has been mooted to account for so extraordinary a situation having been fixed upon — a mountain hardly accessible, surrounded on all sides by the terrible wilderness, no spot pretending to civilization being within many days' journey. The hypothesis broached by the above traveller was, that they might be the work of a colony of the followers of the shepherd kings, who, when driven out of Egypt, might have brought with them to this place the arts and customs of that nation whose kingdom they had been in the occupation of. But various are the suppositions given birth to by these mysterious blocks, sculptured evidently by a well-skilled chisel. Laborde suggests that this spot may have been the head-quarters of a colony of Egyptian miners seeking copper, the presence of which mineral he seems to have detected in this range; but it is an idea which cannot be deemed satisfactory, as

some who have a slight knowledge of hieroglyphics say that those presented here denote tombs of great and powerful men; a remark, the truth of which is favoured by the beauty of their execution. Evidently nothing has yet transpired to throw any light upon the origin or intention of these extraordinary remains of antiquity; a veil of mystery enshrouds them, which might probably be raised in some degree by the arduous study and research of men of science despatched to the spot itself, for the purpose of minutely examining it and taking off impressions of the hieroglyphics, an operation easy to be performed, as (thanks to the climate) most of the characters are remarkably perfect, in spite of the lofty and exposed site of their tablets. Names of Pharaohs, data upon which to found a more satisfactory arrangement of those kings already known, and a more certain elucidation of the lines by which their dynasties are represented in the works of ancient chronologists, as well as records of dynasties hitherto totally unknown, might very probably be thus discovered to us, authenticating or overthrowing the suppositions of many learned hierologists, and thus rendering invaluable assistance towards the perfecting of the very incomplete knowledge to which we have yet attained of early Egyptian chronology. Persons undertaking this research upon and in the neighbourhood of Jebel Mokatteb might certainly be exposed to some slight difficul-

ties on account of its remote situation, but none that a "savan" worthy of the title would for a moment shrink from. If his stock of luxuries from Cairo or Suez became exhausted the neighbouring Arabs would, in the spirit of pure hospitality, afford sufficient goats' milk cheese, and parched beans to sustain life; and if a small proportion of treasure trove was promised, would work with hand and heart. Moreover, the convent of Sinai is but two days' journey from the spot; and the holy fathers, for quadruple the intrinsic value in hard money, would, doubtless, growlingly supply a little bread or date cake, having sacrificed upon the altar of devotion and philanthropy all worldly and carnal affections, in order to administer to the cry of the distressed and weary in the gloomy desert where they have fixed their abiding-place. Good Samaritans! they are well rewarded even in this world, extracting little fortunes from the traveller who trespasses upon their brotherly kindness.

Before arriving at Jebel Mokatteb,* we had seen in the neighbouring ravines many inscriptions written in a tongue unknown to living man, and immediately we recognised them as the famed "Sinaitic inscriptions," of which the Prefetto of the Franciscans (who first discovered those in Wady Mokatteb in 1722) says, "Probably these unknown

* This mountain is famed for its turquoizes. An Arab presented me with several upon the spot, but thoughtlessly, unaware of their nature and value, I soon afterwards threw them away.

characters contain some very secret mysteries, and were engraved by the Chaldeans or some other persons long before the coming of Christ." Others are inclined to attribute them to the Israelites, during their forty years' wandering in the wilderness.* The characters are strange and eccentric indeed; and a few of them, carved on a rock jutting from the precipice about fifteen feet from the ground, I sketched. Below this rock lay one fallen from its original position, bearing a rudely scratched tortoise, with a circle beneath containing a cross in its centre, and therefore to be attributed to some Christian pilgrim it may be presumed. On the summit of Jebel Mokatteb, or Surabit El Khadim, we observed no characters of this nature at all.

The name of the wady, where we encamped the evening after our visit to this mountain, I neglected to obtain. Passing a valley leading to it, a Bedouin nymph was tending goats, and she having on her head a curious ornament of beads and shells, I rode towards her; but she, drawing her veil over her face, fled, and, upon our following her, took refuge beneath a low shrub of mimosa, where couching close, she covered even

* Professor Beer, of Leipsic, who has deeply studied these inscriptions, and has published a work upon them, is inclined to consider their language to be that of the Nabathæans, otherwise wholly lost. A summary of the results of his observations is given in the notes to Robinson and Smith's "Biblical Researches," vol. i. The earliest notice made of these inscriptions seems to have been in A.D. 535.

her very eyes. Waiting until the sheikh came up, I made an offer for her head-dress; but she would not speak, so fearing she might be frightened, we moved on, but afterwards turning round, saw her taking a long gaze at us, upon which, sending the sheikh back, he by some means so far won upon the brown coquette as to lead her to part with the coveted ornament for a few piastres. It was a net-work of beads mingled with the little white cowrie, and three shells of the mother of pearl oyster of the Red Sea, attached so as to lie flat on the forehead, forming, in the whole, an ornament very similar to some of those worn by the South Sea Islanders. Our sheikh afterwards spun us a yarn, detailing how he had asked this very girl in marriage of her father some time before, but he demanded ten camels for her, which was more than he could afford. One of the party roused his indignation by asking him, why he did not get a cheap wife at Cairo where they were in plenty: to which he replied, that he was fully aware he could buy half the women in Cairo for a dollar or two, "but this desert maiden would not for a 'hundred camels' wander in the least from the path of virtue." She was, indeed, in the eyes of our gallant sheikh,

"Una Dea,
Più fresca, e più vezzosa,
Di matutina rosa;"

and evidently he was deeply inspired with the

"celestial fire," and eagerly looking forward to the time when he should have amassed camels enough to purchase her hand from her avaricious parent. In speaking of the Bedouin ladies, he remarked that all of them are armed with a dagger concealed about their person to defend their honour! Whether this piece of information was correct, or whether it was a little touch of romance on the part of our sheikh, I know not.

It was on the 23d that we entered the romantic pass of "Nukb er Rahah," or "Nukb Hawy," a name said to signify "Windy pass." On each side rose sublime cliffs of granite, and the chaos of fallen masses over which the camels had to pass, rendered it terribly difficult to them, and tiring to us. In one spot grew some dwarf palm-trees and wild figs, near a spring in which was a little water. We now were fast drawing near the Mount of God, and presently, pressing on with deepening interest and eager haste, we surmounted the difficulties of the pass, and there burst upon our sight a lofty wall of frowning granite, surmounted by toppling peaks—a mountain of terrific majesty—and this was—Horeb!—Horeb itself was before us, and near at hand!

Onward we went, and passing up the narrow wady leading to the convent, after crossing the plain Er Rahah, we soon were beneath the walls of the sacred building, and shouting lustily, a monk presently replied, and after peering forth

from the little trap-door with an eye of suspicion, he ventured to open it, so as to receive from us a letter from the branch convent at Cairo; which potent document being delivered by means of a rope let down for the purpose, he read it, and again lowering the same rope with a cross stick attached, very similar to an antiquated broomstick, we, one after another, sitting astride upon it were hauled up thirty feet of wall, and embraced by Father Nicodemus, the head of the convent, a noble-looking man of good stature, and adorned with a magnificent beard of spotless white. The process of arriving at this peculiar portal of the convent requires a little attention on the part of the person ascending; otherwise he is liable, much to the disturbance of his dignity, to spin round and round like a joint of meat on a bottle-jack—now his back against the wall, and now his face! Whether the Oriental who preserves with so much care his long lock of hair as a hoisting rope to Paradise, considers the strange evolutions he will be liable to perform, I know not; but our ascent to the convent's seventh heaven totally overturned that becoming demeanour with which one would wish to greet a venerable host; for, after many vain kicks and struggles, effecting the landing, we were half smothered in the old gentleman's arms before quite assured that we had "found our own legs."

The rope, which is thus let up and down, for (as the monks would tell you) the "convenience" of

travellers, is regulated by a large windlass, turned by members of that curious race, serfs of the convent, said to be descendants of certain Egyptians sent by Justinian, the builder of the convent, to be its vassals and guard. Over them the fraternity have supreme control, holding in their hands their liberty and lives. Divided into clans, they dwelt near the different possessions of the convent, at one time numbering near two thousand souls according to tradition. Excepting a few baptized by the monks of Sinai, their religion is Muhammedan; but still they are contemned by the desert tribes, some of whom have at times claimed them as serfs. Dr. Robinson, from whom chiefly this information is drawn, gives an interesting account of them, and calls them the "Jebelîyeh." In appearance they are hardly to be distinguished from the Bedouins. The diminution of their number (for there are now of them but a few families) Pococke informs us has been caused by contentions amongst themselves.

Niebuhr was prevented from entering this convent on account of his not having brought a letter from the superior at Cairo, the monks here not being permitted to receive a Frank, unless so recommended by their bishop who resides in that city. The inaccessible entrance was formed in order to secure them from the Arabs; but the loftiness of the adjacent rocks have often afforded these troublesome neighbours excellent spots from whence to throw bullets into the convent. In the last-mentioned

traveller's time they were much in the habit of doing this, and never missed an opportunity of seizing any monk who might be found outside of the walls, in order to obtain from him a ransom for deliverance; but now they are more peaceful, and seldom annoy the holy inmates. Laborde, however, relates that when he was there in 1828, a Bedouin, practising upon the monks from the rocks aloft, placed a ball in the thigh of a pilgrim, mistaking him for one of the brotherhood; but few great outrages have been committed now for some years.

Father Nicodemus showed us into a small room with divans around it, and there sat chatting with us until a slight repast was ready, prepared by the hands of a venerable old cook of the convent; for our own servants and baggage camels had not yet arrived, as we had sent them round by another route instead of taking them with us by the difficult pass of "Nûkb Hâwy." They should have been at the convent however long before this hour, for it was very late at night, and we were led to fear they might have been robbed.

We slept upon the floor, and to keep myself warm, I rolled round me a part of an old drugget that covered it, the filth visible upon the planks beneath which when the morning light appeared somewhat shocked my nerves. The following morning our camels and servants arrived, and a confused account was given us of a quarrel having taken place between them and the Arab escort, which rose to such a height

that knives were drawn and they had to stand upon their defence with their pistols. We did not much doubt the cause of the quarrel, attributing it to the overbearing manners of our servants, several of whom being Copts (a sect the character of which is stained by the bitter bigotry of its members) had before showed some disposition to annoy their Moslem companions, merely from abhorrence of their faith. They spoke however of the Arabs endeavouring to steal something from the baggage, and of their gallantly standing forth in defence of our property; both of which proceedings we deemed highly improbable, especially the latter.

During our abode at this convent, we visited "Mount Sinai," "Horeb," and the lofty mountain of St. Catharine. The morning after our arrival we made the ascent of the first mountain, which is much facilitated by stone steps placed by the early monks, and numbered by Pococke at three thousand, whilst the "Prefitto of the Franciscans" says fifteen thousand. Many of them are now much shaken from their original situation, and it would therefore be a difficult undertaking to reckon their number at all. A short distance above the commencement of the ascent, we rested at a spot where a spring of most pure water bubbles forth in a rocky basin; a fountain endued with many virtues, according to tradition. About half an hour further stands a rough-built stone chapel, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Some short distance higher we

passed a narrow gateway in the rock, where pious pilgrims used formerly to confess, and having thus obtained from the priests a remission of their sins, with a clean breast they passed on singing, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall rise up in his holy place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart, and that hath not lifted his mind up unto vanity." These devotees, it is said, first received the sacrament at the chapel below, and leaving at this portal a ticket to that effect, were given another in exchange, which they left in like manner at another portal a slight distance above; through which we afterwards passing, entered a plain, or rather basin, of small dimensions, and walled in with craggy precipices. This is the spot where the ways to the summit of Horeb and to that of Sinai separate. A tall cypress rises in the centre, near a pool of water; a desolate and lonely tree, doomed soon to become a victim to age and the howling winds which, rushing in torrents through the narrow ravines, have blasted it, leaving only a mass of foliage here and there clinging to its spiral stem. Of "two delightful cypress-trees and two olive-trees," noted by an early traveller as standing here in his time, this is the sole survivor. A little chapel, dedicated to Elijah, is nigh at hand, beneath a beetling precipice. That Prophet, flying from the face of Jezebel, and travelling for forty days and forty nights upon the strength of the meat given him by the angel

of the Lord, came to "Horeb, the mount of God;" and this, tradition says, is the spot, where the word of God came unto him, saying, "Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord;" and "the Lord passed by; and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord." (1 Kings xix. 11.) And here they show you the cave in which the man of God lodged, for "he came thither unto a cave and lodged there." Mighty fragments of rent and torn masses of rock are strewed here in all directions, illustrating both the rending of the mountains, and the breaking in pieces of the rocks before the Lord. Sir Frederick Henniker erroneously mentions this as the spot where Elijah was fed by ravens; but he had previously gone and "dwelt by the *brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.* And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook" Mr. Stephens, the American traveller, christens the starving cypress, mentioned above, a "palm-tree:" for where he says, "I threw myself on the ground under the palm-tree, near the fountain of Elias," he can but mean this cypress, as there is nothing else in the shape of a tree at hand. It certainly resembles a palm more than the mimosa bush in the desert, between Cairo and Suez, which he dignifies in like manner.

We were now led to the foot-print left by the camel which Mahomet rode up to heaven, with the

assistance of the angel Gabriel. So powerful an assistance must have been requisite indeed, for this camel must have been a marvellously bulky beast, standing, as it did, with one foot here, one at Mecca, another at Damascus, and the fourth at Cairo! thus forming, as it were, a kind of prophetic triumphal arch, spanning that wide space, over which the tenets of its rider have now chiefly extended: but the travelled Franciscan says, the cunning monks told him they had made this mark "to gain for the mountain greater veneration from the Turks." Near this spot is an awful precipice, standing on the edge of which the eye scans a vast space, including mountains and wadys innumerable. Another twenty minutes' walk, or less, brought us to the very summit of the mount, where are the remains of a church and mosque, once standing here, but now a heap of ruins. Robinson gives the admeasurement of Rüppel, for the height of this peak above the sea, as 7,035 Paris feet, and that of the peak of St. Catharine, which is seen towering aloft, south-west of this spot, as a thousand feet higher. Sitting down beneath the walls of the old chapel, we lighted a fire and had a brew of coffee: for it was early, and the wind rather chill than otherwise, rendering something warm very desirable. Large stones lie scattered about this spot; and one of very great size, and, apparently, once forming a part of one of the walls of the chapel, presents at its base a

hole by which you are enabled to get beneath it. Tradition has not passed this unnoticed, but affirms, that it is this very rock, relating to which, the Lord said unto Moses, at the time of the delivery of the law upon the two tables of stone, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." The "Tables of Testimony" are related to have been delivered exactly upon the spot where now stand the remains of the chapel. Beneath the ruins of the mosque is a cave, down to which are steps; and here Moses is said to have dwelt when "he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights, and did neither eat bread, nor drink water."

From hence you behold far below a deep valley, which by some has been considered the Vale of Rephidim, "where the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink," as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Exodus; but Rephidim, it appears, by the second verse of the nineteenth chapter, was not in the immediate neighbourhood of Sinai; for there it is stated, "They were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai." According to the summing up of the journeys of the children of Israel, as given in the thirty-third chapter of Numbers, Dophkah, Alush, and Rephidim, were stations

between the boundaries of the Desert of Sin and the Wilderness of Sinai. Robinson seems inclined to fix Rephidim at a spot in Wady Esh-Sheikh, about five hours' distance from the *embouchure* of that wady into the plain Er-Rahah. That there is in those parts at this time no great lack of water, does not seem to me a difficulty of any great weight opposed to this supposition, for in those confined regions, where crags and precipices shut you in, and tracks are choked up by fallen masses of rock, although there may have been then, as now, several springs near at hand, yet a multitude foreign to the spot might very probably not light upon them: moreover, prudence forbade an extensive search for them, for the hosts of Amalek were at hand. Again, it is a question whether, perhaps, many of the springs now known may not have been brought to light by divers convulsions of nature since that period: for now earthquakes rend at times these mountains, and mighty masses are continually falling, in some instances exposing springs pent up in the bowels of the mountain, and in others choking those before open—or, may they not have been hid from the eyes of the host of Israel, that the Lord again might show them the power of his almighty hand, by producing water from the flinty rock? Round the western extremity of the above valley, we afterwards visited the stone said to be struck by the great leader of Israel, to quell their murmurs.

From the peak of Sinai we beheld a portion of the Gulf of Akabah, eastward of us. Descending again as far as the chapel of Elijah, we followed a track to the west, in order to reach the summit known as Horeb. Immense quantities of hyssop grow about these crags; and upon this plant appeared a curious disease, like lumps of white wool, doubtless the work of some insect, but seemingly prevalent on all the little bushes of it.

We had brought some tiffin with us, and found a good spot, at the base of the "Es-Susafeh" peak of Horeb, to light a fire, there being a bush or two around, and one willow, of which I brought away a specimen. Leaving our attendants here to boil some eggs and make coffee, we reached the top of the peak, with some labour. From this peak there is a fine view of the Wady Er-Rahah immediately below, and it is to this summit that Robinson wishes to shift the site noted by tradition as that where the glory of the Lord appeared to the host of Israel at the giving of the law.

Leaving our elevated seat, we descended again to the lunching place, some five hundred feet below, where, upon our arrival, we sat down beneath the walls of a little chapel to take our refreshment, and then departed for the convent, having completed a pretty good day's work.

CHAPTER XXI.

SINAI.

Jebel Catharine.—Disputes as to the true Mount of God.—Peter, the Athenian.—His journey to Saturn.—Monks of the Convent of Sinai.—The Holy Fathers' last resting-place.—Ancient Anchorites.

A MORE laborious task was arranged for the ensuing morning, and it was early that we rose from our couches, after a refreshing sleep produced by climbing the rugged Sinai, to climb the still more rugged and difficult height of Jebel Catharine. Upon the way between the convent of Sinai and that of "the Forty Martyrs," the rock which Moses smote for water was pointed out to us. "Behold, I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." There is nothing peculiar about this rock, it being only one amongst ten thousand others fallen from the face of Horeb, and cut and scratched by the ready knives of pilgrims. Moreover, I strongly suspect that the venerable inmates of the convent, devoured by *ennui*, make a pastime

of marking up hieroglyphics, and passing them off as the works of devout pilgrims of ancient date. "An idle brain is the devil's workshop," and the musty smell exuding from the convent library said little for the literary studies of the holy fathers.

Not far from the rock of Moses is a garden with olive and other fruit-trees, amongst which, in days of old, a certain St. Onuphrius spent, as it is related, a devout forty years of his life. The fruit-trees do him credit, flourishing as if the hand of industry had well trained them. Passing through the convent garden of the Forty Martyrs, we soon reached the base of Jebel Catharine, and commenced the ascent, resting for a moment on the way at a beautiful fountain, which is said to have miraculously bubbled forth at the command of some partridges attending the bearers of the corpse of St. Catharine, when descending from the summit of this mountain to the convent below. Arrived at last at the top, we found the ruined chapel, where angels deposited the body after conveying it through the air from Alexandria, and the impression of the virgin saint is still seen in the rock.

The view from hence is grand in the extreme. Towering eight thousand and sixty-three French feet above the sea, and two thousand seven hundred above the convent of the Forty Martyrs, this is indeed a commanding height, a thousand feet more lofty than the peak of Jebel Mûsa, and the highest

point of Horeb. The Gulf of Suez and the mountains of Africa alone bounded our vision on the south-west, whilst upon the east our sight embraced the Gulf of Akabah and its stern mountain coast. It is a view of wild and magnificent grandeur; a sea of rocky heights of such savage sterility no other point in the world can, surely, command: it is indeed a "great and terrible wilderness!"

The descent of this mountain we found quite as difficult as the ascent, great caution being required on account of the looseness of the rocks which choke the way. It was dark before we entered the convent.

Tradition has flown from mountain to mountain, from peak to peak, dubious which may be in verity the "Mount of God." Jebel Serbal, Jebel Catharine, and Jebel Mûsa, have at different periods been fixed upon as that Sinai whereupon the Lord "descended in fire." For many centuries the last has been preferred before the rest; but Dr. Robinson would again disturb its crown of glory, and place it on the modern Horeb. From our own observations, we did not, however, deem his arguments on that point so conclusive as he seems to consider them. Neither did we, as we stood on the peak of Jebel Mûsa, feel justified in saying with him, "There is not the slightest reason for supposing that Moses had anything to do with the summit which now bears his name," because that summit is hidden

from the plain on which Dr. Robinson affirms the Israelites MUST have encamped. Surely there is a *slight* reason for supposing that Moses may have had "something to do" with the summit called Jebel Mûsa; viz., the tradition to that effect of fifteen hundred years standing. Weak and visionary as is the character of tradition, this *is* certainly but a slight authentication of the above supposition; yet the trembling fabric in this instance is not, perhaps, decisively overthrown by the learned professor; or, if it be deemed so, that with which he would replace it can hardly be said to be erected upon surer foundations. The majestic grandeur of that portion of Sinai called Horeb, doubtless overwhelms the feelings of him who looks upon its venerable precipices; doubtless moves the warm and excited imagination to cry aloud for the erection upon its mighty summit of a shrine to those sacred associations which cause the heart of the Christian to leap within him as he treads this holy region. Again, the plain Er-Rahah, at the foot of that awful mountain, certainly presents a noble space for the encampment of a considerable host. Neither, as the Doctor observes, can any part of that plain be seen from the summit usually regarded as the Mount of God. But the assertion that from that summit "neither are the bottoms of the adjacent valleys, nor is any spot to be seen around it where the people could have assembled," may surely be doubted by one who has stood on that summit, upon the brink of a tremendous pre-

cipice, and gazed down upon the panoramic view of surpassing sublimity, embracing nigh at hand three extensive wadys, and in the distance innumerable smaller ones, intersecting the inferior mountains below in all directions. Amongst these narrow wadys, shaded from the scorching sun, the multitude of Israel would find for their flocks and herds more vegetation than upon an open plain exposed to the burning heat. Again, amongst these inferior mountains, covered with loose piles of granite, and traversed by narrow ravines, they would be better enabled to seek for herbage, more likely to discover springs, than amongst the perpendicular precipices walling in the barren plain of Er-Rahah.

Doubtless the host of Israel, "covering the face of the earth" even as when Balak beheld them from "the high places of Baal," were scattered with their tents, their flocks, and their herds, throughout those wadys, *including* also the plain Er-Rahah. From the Scripture narrative, may it not be inferred that the camp, or at all events part of it, was *not* within sight of the top of the mount "on which the Lord appeared," for "Moses *brought forth* the people *out* of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the *nether* part of the mount." These expressions surely tend to the supposition that they were brought to a spot where they were not before. But neither the value of this inference, nor this supposition, is worth canvassing;

for we are not to suppose that the glory of God was confined to one particular summit, but contrariwise, for "Sinai was *altogether* in a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire."

Sinai is the name generally admitted to have been applied to the whole range, including Horeb and other peaks. Dr. Robinson, however, considers *Horeb* as the general name, and *Sinai* as the particular one. The "main fact" which he brings forward to prove this is, "that while the Israelites were encamped at Rephidim, Moses was commanded to go on with the elders before the people, and smite the rock in Horeb, in order to obtain water for the camp." The locality of Rephidim being purely conjectural, and the possibility of deciding what portion of Sinai might be denominated Horeb being out of the question, what does the fact here referred to prove? Surely it merely substantiates the idea that the term Sinai included the general range. The rock thus directed to be struck is mentioned as the rock in HOREB, to denote the particular situation of the rock in the range of Sinai, viz., in that part called *Horeb*.

But the question as to the very Mount of God is of such a nature that it can never be solved. Upon what particular height the "glory of the Lord" may have more especially appeared can never be proved. Horeb,—the little mountain blocking in the extremity of Wady Sheikh, at the back of the convent, (not particularly laid

down in Dr. Robinson's plan, but called, I think, "*Jebel Monacha;*") Jebel Deir, and Jebel Mûsa, are perhaps each equally likely (did not tradition favour the latter) to have been the chosen spot. "Bounds" might be set to any of these mountains at that point to which the people were brought. "Thou shalt set *bounds* unto the people round about." "Whosoever toucheth the mount shall surely be put to death." Any of the above mountains might be *touched*, unless the host had been kept back by this sanctified imaginary line, or whatever the fence against doing so may have been: whereas if these directions referred to that part of Horeb to which Dr. Robinson affixes them, the warning, "Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mountain," is out of place; for it would be a matter of utter impossibility to ascend the perpendicular precipices, presenting, at that point, a wall of above fifteen hundred feet in height. Not that any weight is to be given to the argument that has been urged, that Horeb cannot be the true Sinai, on account of this inaccessibility; for divine aid may have rendered that of nought to the favoured leader of the people of God during his frequent journeys up and down the mount. Moreover, natural convulsions that are unrecorded may, perhaps, since that remote period, have transformed the character of these mountains.

Upon that morning when "there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount,

and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was within the camp trembled," the whole range of Sinai was doubtless clothed with the majesty of the Lord, and the surrounding mountains reflected the glory of God; for "Mount Sinai was altogether in a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." The transcendent presence of the Lord of hosts assuredly shone not upon one particular peak alone of the sublime mountain range.

The day after our ascent of Jebel Katherîn, I visited, with Dr. Stevenson, the conical-shaped mountain, of small elevation, that terminates the south-eastern extremity of the Wady Shueib, which I have mentioned as Jebel Monacha, and from whence this wady and the plain of Er-Rahah is well in view. The base of this mountain is a very short distance from the convent. We afterwards roamed about and collected specimens of various flowers. A botanist would doubtless find there many rare and curious plants. Indeed, many of those I collected, though ignorant of the science, have proved so.

One of the members of the convent, whom we had christened "Peter," generally had his meals with us, and both his appearance and his appetite betokened that it was a happy time for him. He was a Greek, an Athenian schoolmaster once upon

a time; but his brain having become weakened, it appeared that his friends had wisely sent him to this remote convent as a lunatic asylum. Often this strange being amused us much with relations of his chequered life; not the least curious incident of which was a journey he professed to have made to the planet Saturn, where the scenery and inhabitants seem to have afforded him exquisite satisfaction, but more particularly the courtesy of some fair spirits he there met, and the wonders of a city marvellous in magnitude and beauty, the luxuries and delights of which had evidently captivated Peter's heart. The solidity of the matter composing the ring of the planet he well attested, thus setting at rest any necessity for further disputation on that point in the Galileo world. Peter was a slight well-formed figure, having a good Grecian physiognomy, excepting as to the forehead, which was low, and overhanging clear grey eyes, fraught with the restlessness of insanity: his abilities evidently were naturally good; Italian, French, Greek, and Arabic he was equally master of, and, moreover, had a slight knowledge of English. But we found him at last rather too encroaching to be agreeable; a disposition which he impressed upon us by getting one day into a grievous rage, upon finding one of us occupying his accustomed seat at our hospitable board; neither was he a great respecter of the property of others, making a confusion of "meum" and "tuum;" indeed, before we bade

him adieu, stealing a keepsake of no less value than a compass and thermometer, and upon our making search for it, he expostulated with us for shewing so great an anxiety concerning it; "for," said he, "I shall doubtless find it when you are gone, and will keep it for you till you are this way again." He did find it after our departure, as he predicted; for some English travellers afterwards saw it in his possession; and, recognising it as Dr. Stevenson's, even offered him money for it, that they might deliver it to its rightful proprietor; but Peter's conscience would not allow him to part with it at any price, saying, "The Doctor will doubtless call for it some day."

The number of monks in the convent at this time was thirty, which is their full complement. Many of them were remarkably fine healthy old men, and of most venerable appearance; their hale aspect speaking for the regularity of their lives. Their vigils are severe, and, according to their own account, strictly kept; their style of living extremely simple: abjuring flesh, and the produce of flesh, such as milk and cheese, they live wholly on pot-herbs, fruits, and a kind of cake made of figs, almonds, and dates, which they compound themselves, and of which, at the instigation of our friend Peter, we laid in a stock. May not this be the species of cake, "a cake of figs," referred to in 1 Sam. xxx. 12, which David's men gave to the Egyptian whom they found in the field nigh the

brook "Besor," during the pursuit of the Amalekites, who "had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire?" A cake of much the same nature is a standard commodity in all Eastern bazaars.

The monks profess to perform scrupulously the prescribed ceremonials of the Greek ritual, devoting many hours both of the day and night to their observance. The church is of the age of the Emperor Justinian, and rich in silver ornaments. Over the high altar of the Chapel of the "Burning Bush" an ancient mosaic represents, it is said, Justinian and his Empress Theodora. Putting our shoes from off our feet, we approached the spot beneath the altar where stood the bush in which "the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire," when "he kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, and led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." In a recess nigh at hand is a sarcophagus richly ornamented, wherein reposes the body of St. Catharine, according to the monks, adorned with jewels of great price.

Peter, in his anxiety to display all worthy of our attention, called down upon him the condign indignation of one of the holy fathers, who, indeed, seemed to treat him with undue sharpness, and, if his tale might be relied on, barbarously used him when first he became an inmate of the convent;

" for," said he, " they placed a large iron bar round my neck to prevent my escape." But probably his relation was chiefly the fruit of a diseased imagination: moreover, he was very anxious to libel the holy fraternity in every way, his indignation being excessive because they would not allow him to convert the refectory into a billiard-room!

Besides the church dedicated to the transfiguration, there are numerous chapels to saints,—" Great Unknowns," with remarkably hard names,—who have either died in the clefts of the rocks around or lived within the convent walls, combining authority with superior chastity of life.

After visiting the library, rich in Greek works of ancient date, we were led by the Superior through a long subterraneous passage into the garden, where is a goodly show of fruit-trees. Figs, apricots, and almonds, are, in their season, produced here in great abundance, and at the western extremity is the general receptacle for the bones of the deceased monks, where pile upon pile of arms, legs, and heads, may be seen, with now and then a complete skeleton. A very ancient father with us seemed to look forward with extreme eagerness to adding his mite to the ghastly collection, and taking up a grinning skull of some defunct brother, tapped it with great jocularity. Leaving this charnel-house, we sat down to dinner, for the last time in the convent; and that evening did we, for the last time, behold the setting sun gild the lofty

summits which overhang that sacred spot, sought by pilgrims more than sixteen centuries ago, who, in spite of desert sands, and the unbridled ferocity of barbarous tribes, dared the awful journey, often on foot, and alone, across the terrible wilderness, the surface of which, reflecting the most intense heat, lay around them as a wide extended sheet of fire, or rose in choking clouds of drifting sand, fearfully increasing their acute but contemned sufferings. Abjuring country, friends, and kindred, they bade adieu to this world, and, striving which could make to themselves the greatest hell of earth, eked out the remaining span of life within some dark and narrow cave amongst the rocks of Sinai; where, voluntarily manacled with galling irons forbidding any attitude of repose, they battled with the fierce cravings of nature, abjuring sleep, food, and cleanliness, until, sinking beneath self-inflicted torture, death reached them, hairy, ulcerated skeletons, but—Holy Anchorites!

The passing traveller will continually find the mountains of the East pierced with such gloomy retreats, where these wretched ascetics thus lingered out their lives, victims to demoniacal fanaticism; regarded then with admiring adoration, now with contemptuous pity. Yet not by all were these gloomy hermits esteemed holy; for the Amalekites of the day, the relentless Saracens, regarded them, living or dead, with great abomination, and often, climbing up to their aerial cells, would drag them

down to massacre or slavery. During the fourth century, especially, these fierce worshippers of the morning star, descendants of the Nabathæans, thus persecuted the solitary tenants of the dark cliffs of Sinai and Horeb; murdering the old in cold blood, and leading the young captive for serfs, or for sale.

CHAPTER XXII.

SINAI TO JERUSALEM.

Leave Convent of Sinai.—Porphyry strata.—Black Locust.—Scarabæus Pilularius.—Scorpion, Hares, Quails.—Lose my pistols.—Arab sagacity in tracing footsteps.—Storks migrating.—Wady el Arish.—Optical delusion.—Adventure with Arabs.—Sheikh taken prisoner.—Sand storm.—Pursued by Arabs.—Ancient foundations in Wady el Ain.—Ancient site.—Wady es Serdam.

THE morning sun was striving to impart a little life to the deep and dark ravine of Wady Shueib; a solitary warbler of the desert, with its plumage of glossy black, had already sought a pinnacle of granite midway up the lofty precipice of Jebel Deir, from whence to greet with its soft melodious song the first rays of warmth, careless of the stern and rugged scene around, when, for the last time, we found ourselves again swinging in succession upon the rope of descent from Sinai's Convent door. For my own part, I felt it a very happy relief once more to escape from monks and walls, to seek the wide and open desert. As to the former, they so often bring to mind "that sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, with shaven

crowns," whose skulls the Caliph Abubeker gave his army of true believers such particular directions to cleave, exhorting them, "Be *sure* you cleave *their* skulls," that I always prefer lodging elsewhere than within the walls of their gloomy retreats, if possible. It was therefore with very great glee that I remounted my dromedary, and bade adieu to Father Nicodemus; whom we left sitting upon a large stone in the convent, his noble features buried in his ample beard, and overcast with gloom and discontent, because we had not presented him with so large a sum as he had visioned to glean from us, though we afterwards found we had given far more than usual. Thus are these men, professedly dead to the world, still haunted by the love of filthy lucre. Forgetful "that in this theatre of man's life God and angels alone should be *lookers-on*," the slothful inmate of the convent is often found lusting for riches, which those alone may justly expect who are engaged in the true service of God, by rendering themselves actively useful to their fellow-creatures.

Rounding the western foot of the towering Jebel Deir, I took one long last gaze of Jebel Mûsa's rugged base, and Horeb's black precipices overhanging the melancholy monk-abode; then striking my dromedary with the coarse rope serving as a bridle, away she swung to rejoin her fellows, now winding up Wady esh-Sheikh. The sublime precipices of El-Fureia ex-

cited within us amazement and admiration, as proceeding onward we passed nigh the wely of some sheikh of great repute, a mere domed structure of rough stones, and of small dimensions.

Leaving the track to Akaba upon the right, we kept more northward, and traversed a very curious ravine, intersecting a mountain with eight separate peaks of naked granite, walls of granite shutting us in on either side, from the face of which rose pinnacles of rock, like gothic spires, giving both a beautiful and unique character to this pass, resembling nothing I had ever met with in Alps, Appenines, or Pyrenees.

About four o'clock we reached a small plateau, surrounded with a lofty wall of sand rock which, worked by water-courses during the rains, had here and there assumed most eccentric forms. One mass presented a piece of sculpture almost worthy of a Westmacott or Chantrey, nature having with her chisels of water and wind cut out a most excellent likeness of his late Majesty George the Fourth, King of Great Britain and Ireland, a noble bust, jutting aloof from the main rock. The mass, however, which it was worked from might have suited perhaps Democrates better than modern sculptors, being rather on the Mount Athos scale. Here we encamped amidst clumps of huge tamarisks, by far the largest I ever saw, but torn and shivered in the most extraordinary manner; some, as if their great limbs had been

struck and splintered by the forked lightning, others, as if an enormous fragment of rock precipitated on them had crushed their boughs, or whirlwinds howling through the bleak recesses of the surrounding mountains had there met and spent their fury. The latter idea is the most likely one I could suggest to account for their remarkable appearance: and pent up as the wind may be at times in this confined space, it would be likely in part to have such an effect.

The spot was picturesque; and the Bedouin group sitting around their watch fires at night, their dark countenances lighted up by the flaring blaze, whilst laughing and chattering amongst themselves, presented a study worthy of any artist. Forming the baggage into a barrier on the side the wind may be, and the camels lying in a circle around them, they are snug enough, and one would imagine by their jocularity, extremely witty and facetious amongst themselves. How often have I watched their bronzed faces animated by some soul-stirring legend or wild tale of the desert, related by one of their party; the flashing eye and exposed range of snowy teeth betokening their awakened interest; and deeply regretted that ignorance of their language left it to imagination alone to divine the character of the conversation thus exciting their feelings! What strange traditions, what wild legends, might doubtless be gathered from these primitive people, dwelling amidst marvellous and unique scenery, the very

sight of which gives birth to wild romantic thought!

We sometimes invited our sheikh to take coffee and pipe with us; little attentions of this kind rendering the Tawârah Arab pleased and happy. Their general disposition indeed, as far as we could judge, is very amiable, and treated with due civility, they will serve you with faithful affection, leading you to any point you may desire, if it is in their power; for time is a thing of nought to them, free as the winds of the wilderness they inhabit.

We had accomplished but a short journey this day. Arranging however for the future to push on a little quicker if possible, we were stirring the next morning by half-past four, and soon after six were off, and each taking his post, acted the camel-driver: for we had experienced that every day much time was lost by the camels being allowed to roam here and there away from the train in search of food. Being gifted with considerable acuteness of vision and powers of scent, one of these animals discovering, perhaps, at a distance, a likely shrub to suit his palate, might ever and anon be seen walking off, with an air of cool dignity, eastward or westward, when the road lay north or south. Our reform worked pretty well, though neither man or beast at first exactly admired it.

The character of the mountains became now not quite so precipitous as that of those we had lately passed: but they presented a striking appearance

from the peculiar manner in which their surfaces were divided into compartments by narrow strata of porphyry, rising edgeways above the other rock and crossing one another in all directions, having the appearance of low walls in the distance; and, in some parts, the surface of the mountains being covered with a green kind of rubble, one might fancy the porphyry walls enclosed not merely the naked mountain rock, but spaces of verdure.

We observed here, as in some other parts of the desert, vast numbers of a species of locust; peculiarly ugly insects, with short broad bodies, and apparently without wings: some were quite black, but most of them brown. There is also another insect very common throughout the desert, being the true scarabæus, once held in adoration by the Egyptians,—but by me in as great detestation; for, in the course of propagating their species, (which the inconsiderate traveller might perhaps deem a work of supererogation,) they form round balls bigger than a musket bullet, encompassing, it is said, their eggs; and these, with the most untiring perseverance, do they roll here and there and everywhere, apparently with no given purpose in view except exercise. The unwary wanderer sitting beneath his tent with a kid pilau before him on the sand, presently casting his eyes upon the dish of savoury food, beholds with most grateful feelings a goodly array of what he considers force-meat balls inserted

among the rice by some kind Efreet; but what his horror when, upon turning to dissect one, forthwith he knows that they are balls of camel's dung, enclosing the eggs of this abominable beetle, a sorry addition to a pilau! This insect is the *scarabæus pilularius*, or rolling beetle, which served as food, it is said, to the sacred ibis, and was also a symbol of fecundity with the ancient Egyptians, its season for coming forth in Egypt being immediately before the inundation of the Nile. Women also ate it to become prolific; and both Greeks and Egyptians wore its representation cut in stone as an amulet. Plutarch mentions it as engraved upon soldiers' signet rings, and, moreover, that it was believed that there were no females of this insect, the males enclosing an egg within these balls of dung, the warmth of which, combined with the continual motion they are kept in, hatching the young, which then eats its way out. Is it not probable that this may be the insect referred to in the eleventh chapter of Leviticus, as one of the "flying creeping things" which the Children of Israel might consider clean? "Even these of them ye may eat: the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the *beetle* after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." And may not the insect here called the "*bald locust*" be that locust which I have noticed above as plentiful in these regions, and being, as it were, *bald* of wings?

One of the Arabs brought me a scorpion doubled up in paper the day after leaving Sinai, and thrusting it into my hand, was much astonished when I, perceiving its venomous tail, hurriedly cast it away; for he imagined, from what he saw passing between me and the serpents of Cairo, that I was charmed against the bite of all noxious reptiles. We saw the same day several hares, but killed none. The colour of these animals is much lighter than that of the hare of our country. A few quails were also sprung in a large wady clothed with a coarse vegetation, a brace of which I shot. Between Sinai and Beersheba we met with considerable numbers of these birds, but never observed that any of them differed from the common quail. It has been urged that that bird is not likely to have been the quail supplied to the Israelites, as it would not be found in the desert; and therefore another variety has been fixed on, and named "Tetrao Israelitarum." It was in the southern part of the wilderness of Paran that *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, "the Graves of Lust," seems to have been, where there "went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp;" and it was in the southern part of the same wilderness that we first met with them. "The sea" in that passage was probably the *Gulf of Elan*, or *Akabah*, and it may be supposed to have been much about this same time of the year, that the Israelites were thus miraculously supplied with flesh. About

the beginning of the month of March this bird arrives in myriads in Egypt. Shooting quails, I lost my pistols from my girdle, but did not discover it for some time, when, informing the sheikh, he tracked my camel (recognising its foot-mark from that of its fellows) to the place where I had last mounted, then my steps, where I had walked here and there amongst the bushes in search of game, and first recovered one, and then, at a considerable distance from it, the other. Whilst I was endeavouring to distinguish my own footprints from that of others, he ran on without hesitation upon the track, and afterwards, upon my expressing my astonishment, noticed to me that a small gap in the heel of one of my boots marked my step from the others, a defect which he had thus so quickly descried, though I could hardly discern it in the track after he had pointed it out.

Upon the 30th we reached the great Wady el-Arish, and encamped in a small watercourse, where we found a little herbage and a few bushes of tamarisk. An immense flight of storks appeared the following morning feeding on the plain, evidently resting on their migration from some more southern region. They proved exceedingly shy, and in spite of creeping a long distance on my hands and knees, I could hardly arrive within bullet range of them. This plain is called "El-Melk" by the Arabs, "*Melk*" intending "salt," which substance they collect in the mountains around, merely for their

own use, picking it from the surface of the rocks. A long range of mountains flank the eastern quarter, called by the Arabs the range of El-Arish, being a continuation, apparently, of that range laid down in Robinson's Map of Arabia Petræa as "Jebel el Ojmeh." The southern extremity of the wady is torn up by watercourses, as if, in those days when there were "giants on the face of the earth," it had been ploughed with a huge plough, a succession of deep furrows, from one to twenty yards in width, cutting it in all directions; but this appearance occupies a space of only four or five miles. At the part where we crossed it I noticed, growing beneath the shade of the tamarisk bushes, great quantities of a gigantic yellow-flowered *orobanche*. After passing this tract, we reached a plateau perfectly bare of herbage, and with a surface of hard beaten sand, covered thickly with small fragments of porphyry, as if blown down from the mountains, and then we again came upon a more verdant part of the wady. The mountains of El-Arish are sand-rock, presenting a walled face, with summits curiously squared off by the action of the winds, whilst here and there huge square bastions of sand-rock stand out from the range, giving the whole exactly the appearance of a gigantic fortification, so regularly are they shaped and cut, as if it were a work of art. In this wady Mr. Hill and I, with the sheikh and a Greek servant, being a little separate from the rest, beheld an apparition, a

form as of a wild beast starting forth from a thicket. The Arab hurried his camels aside with great expedition; the Greek trembled and clung to his saddle; and we were convinced that it was some ferocious tenant of the desert of the first magnitude which we saw ahead of us. Slipping off my camel with my gun, and creeping onward beneath the cover of the bushes until within shot of the object, I perceived our egregious error. Never was there a more ridiculous optical delusion: that the sheikh should have partaken of it is most astonishing, and it afforded amusement for the other Arabs for the remainder of the journey; for it was nothing more than a crooked weather-beaten stump of an old rotten tamarisk, with four limbs like legs, one of which was raised in a kind of attitude of attention, whilst two smaller stunted projections had the figure of ears erect, with an air of surprise mingled with indignation. Knocking one of these off, I added still more to its ferocious appearance, it looking like a lion that had been in the wars and had an ear shot away.

Two days' journey after this we arrived at a ruined building, probably used, in the golden age of Arabian commerce, as a khan for merchant caravans. An Arab tribe had now made it their head-quarters, I believe the Haiwât tribe, who are allied with the Terâbin, between which tribes and the Tawarah is some little jealousy. Our sheikh had engaged to take us the whole journey

from Cairo to Dhoheriyeh, the latter place being within a day's journey of Hebron; but upon passing the boundaries of the territory of this tribe, he told us that most likely they would make us take their camels on instead of his, if we allowed it; but he hoped we would not. Arrived at the station, which stood in the middle of a vast open plain strewed with an amazing quantity of the carcases of camels only lately dead, upon which hundreds of the black and white vulture were making a most sumptuous repast, we found several Arabs lounging about the building, and a few tents erected near the walls. Upon our halting to ask if they had any chickens or milk to spare, they went into the old khan, and returned with a cargo of chickens and eggs, bearing also, at the same time, an order from their sheikh to make us exchange camels, and for the remainder of the journey take an escort of their tribe. This we met with a peremptory refusal; and upon their attempting to enforce the command, gave them notice that we should be compelled to fire on the first man that touched one of our camels. Then, immediately mounting, we continued our course, but not without the loss of one man, an Arab sheikh, who had guided us for the last day or two, whom, on his entering the station, they seized and detained; for which we were indeed very much beholden to them, as he was a disagreeable useless rascal. We had not escaped yet, however; for about a quarter

of a mile from thence a party chasing us overtook the rear of our train, unloaded one of the camels, and seized our faithful Tawarah sheikh. I was carelessly wandering about endeavouring to obtain a shot at a vulture, but hearing a commotion, looked round, and, hastening up to the scene of action, found Mr. Woodhead gallantly cutting right and left with his koorbag, for the rescue of our sheikh. Our Arabs ahead also taking the alarm, came running back in haste, prepared for a skirmish in defence of their leader; and, driving the assailants away, we hastily reloaded the camel they had torn the burthen from, and trotting off at a good round pace, made a forced march of above twelve hours; then, towards night-fall, diverging from the direct course, encamped where we deemed that in case of pursuit we might be missed. The latter part of this day's route lay over a vast and boundless extent of plain, covered with naked sand and rubble. As we sped on a howling wind arose, and tremendous columns of dust and sand came rushing on, dark as thunder-clouds, bringing to my mind the first of the thousand and one tales of the fair Sharazád, and the mighty form of the horrible Efreet which rose before the unfortunate merchant who unwontedly slew with a date-stone the son of the desert Jin, as related in that tale. A lurid glare pervaded the atmosphere as onward drove cloud after cloud of sand, which, driven by adverse blasts in opposite directions, met and burst, then rolled along the

surface of the ground like mighty volumes of black smoke belched from artillery. Perhaps, thought I, they are contending hosts of desert Jins —may our destiny forbid that they assume their true forms! As a land-lubber for the first time upon the bosom of the ocean beholds with trembling the wide expanse, ruffled by a cap-full of wind, and deems it a terrific storm, so did our hearts quail within us, and so did we consider this an awful phenomenon; but the sagacious camel (always aware of and prognosticating danger when at hand), quietly swung on, and the Arab laughing, showed his white teeth, and cried, Tieb! tieb! for to them it was a mere nothing, a mere passing freak of the winds of the wilderness. And ere another short hour had passed the atmosphere was clear again, the heavens assumed their wonted aspect, and the army of efreets had disappeared. The driving sand, however, had penetrated the very pores of our skin. Our raiment had afforded little protection. In spite of the capacious hood of my bernoose, drawn closely over my eyes and face, the former were inflamed and filled with dust, whilst my nostrils and throat were choked up; neither for several days, in spite of all our exertions, could we free our apparel from the impalpable dust, which caused us great discomfort. On the way another visitor had honoured us with his unexpected presence; a fine wild-looking fellow on a good steed came flying down upon us with his long gun, rode

right through the middle of our company, eyeing each of us in a very scrutinizing manner, and then dashed off as suddenly as he appeared.

The following day was Sunday; but our sheikh requested us, instead of lying still, as usual with us on that day, to start by daybreak, and make another forced march to get clear of our neighbours. We observed that evening a very peculiar phenomenon; the rays of the sun, already sunk below the horizon, were reflected strongly on the eastern sky: and this we again observed the following evening. Night had now veiled the earth with her sable curtain, when we laid us down to sleep, leaving our Arabs to act as sentries, lest, during the dread darkness, the Philistines should fall upon us, an unresisting host.

"Che dal sonno alla morte è un picciol varco."

But before lying down we also arranged, in case of attack, to meet at a particular tent, to prevent confusion as much as possible, not forgetful that—

"La notte i tumulti ognor più mesce,
Ed occultando i rischi, i rischi accresce."

The morn was but gleaming with an uncertain light when, arousing our men, we took a hasty cup of coffee, and were just on the point of starting, when an alarm was given that the enemy was bearing down upon us. Drawing together, we awaited their approach. One of them proved to be either the hostile sheikh himself or his son,

a fine young fellow, dressed in a long silk tunic, and otherwise superiorly accoutred. Taking one of our servants for an interpreter, we walked forward to meet them, and discover what was their desire, which they coolly pronounced to be, that we should remain a day where we were, until they brought us camels to take us on. This we of course refused, and the discussion becoming very warm, the ominous clicking of the locks of fire-arms was to be heard; but our sheikh came forward, and said that, rather than cause a feud, he would agree to take their camels instead of his own. This we told him he might do if he liked, if they chose to follow and overtake us as they could; for that we did not intend to be delayed, but should be off immediately on our old camels, and not stop before night. This was tending to increase the hubbub, but, as we were obstinate and they not strong enough to force us, it was so agreed on, and by the following morning their camels, having followed our track, were awaiting us by break of day. We were now short of water, at least the little we had in the barrels was quite black and fœtid from shaking; therefore, arriving at the little wady *Muweileh*, which is rich in herbage and traversed by a stream, we laid in a fresh stock; but it proved very brackish, almost too much so to drink. There were quails here and pigeons in abundance, the little blue-rock pigeon, which inhabit in shoals the caves in the rocks. It is ex-

cessively mountainous in this neighbourhood; but the elevation of the range on either side did not appear very great. In this little wady, amongst thick shrubs of tamarisk and other trees unknown to me, we heard a sound that for many a day had not greeted our ears: it was the song of a bird, and a British bird, the "lesser whitethroat." I would willingly have pitched my tent there for a week, and drank salt water *ad libitum*, to enjoy its warbling. None but those who have experienced the dead melancholy silence of the desert can properly appreciate the presence of these enliveners of the earth. Even a verdant country like our own beautiful land would have a lifelessness about it if deprived of these tenants. What then must be the dreariness of a country almost wholly devoid both of verdure and of birds? There is one bird alone that could be called a warbler that we met with in the wilderness before, and that was chiefly amongst the rocks of the neighbourhood of Sinai, a bird about the size of a robin, with a perfectly black body, a white crown to the head, and a white tail. This beautiful bird we heard once or twice early in the morning singing the sweetest strains, something resembling the song of the "black-cap" warbler, a heavenly sound to our ears, unaccustomed to such music. Leaving this wady we entered Wady el Ain, and pitched our tents close to a barley patch, where our camels fared luxuriously, and I found much sport amongst the quails,

which were there exceedingly numerous. A hole in a sand-bank near was strewed with litter, and doubtless the Arab proprietor sometimes resided there to guard his little farm; but he was then abroad, and we saw no living creature except our own party.

We struck now into Dr. Robinson's route from Akabah, in order that we might visit the ruins of Eboda, as well as those of Ruhaibeh, which lie between the former site and Elusa, and seem to be a discovery of that traveller, and merely named by him *Ruhaibeh*, from the wady in which it lies, *Er-Ruhaibeh*. Of what ancient city it may be the site is at present a mystery. On our road between Wady Muweileh and Eboda, we noticed the foundations of walls near Wady el Ain, also observed by Robinson, and which he supposes may have been divisions of cultivated fields. At present there is no cultivation on that spot, and the walls have evidently been of such strength, and are at such equal distances apart, that one is led to imagine they were erected for some greater purpose. Some of us almost fancied they might have been fortification walls run across the pass from the low hills on each side. We thought that upon the summit of one of the hills to the east we discerned some mounds, having the appearance of an ancient site; but we could not conveniently go out of our course to examine them. Of the above-mentioned foundations of walls there are ten visible,

running parallel with one another, in a direction east and west, or nearly so. Passing from hence into a broad valley, well cultivated with corn, whilst hunting about for quails, I discovered what possibly may have a relation to these walls; for, about a quarter of a mile out of the track, on the left, were quantities of large stones well cut, lying, in some places a good many together, though mostly deposited in rows by the Arab proprietors as land divisions; and in one spot in particular the foundations of a small building were visible, forming a square. This is perhaps the site of another of the "decayed" places of Judah. But my party had gone so much a-head that further investigation was out of the question; so I hastened after them, and we proceeded up the Wady es-Serdam, and at its northern extremity beheld on our left the lofty hill crowned with the ruins of "*Eboda;*" before turning towards which, however, we mounted two little hillocks on our right, where were masses of large squared stones, probably the remains of watch-towers, forming part of the outworks of that powerful city, the crumbling vestiges of which we were on the point of visiting.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SINAI TO JERUSALEM.

Ruins of Eboda.—Eastern Wells.—Rain.—Ruins of Er-Ruhaibeh.—Syrian Partridge.—Explore mysterious Excavations.—Chameleon.—Elusa.—Arab Encampment.—Beersheba.—Arab Migration.—Storks.—Barbarians of Dhoherîyeh.—Dispute with them.—Tawârah Guides leave us.—New Escort.—Encampment in the "Hill country of Judæa."—Escort refuse to go to Jerusalem.—Accident to a Camel.—The Roller.—Behold Jerusalem!

THE bed of a torrent (at this time perfectly dry) crosses the Wady es-Serdam, and upon the left hand of the track upon the plain are innumerable walls, some several feet in height and of great solidity, enclosing vast square spaces, leading into which the stone thresholds of gateways in some places remain. The Acropolis of the city lies a good half hour north-west of the spot where the track crosses the water-course, and along the eastern base of the hill upon which it is situated is the winding channel of the same stream, crossing which again, we mounted the steep sides of the height on which the chief remains are to be found. Fallen masses of ruin render the ascent fatiguing. Upon a high mound at the western ex-

tremity of the hill we sat down to luncheon, within what appears to have been a little chapel, forming part of a church which once stood here, and of the remains of which Dr. Robinson gives a description. Broken columns and fragments of frieze, well sculptured, tell the explorer of her ruins that labour and skill were expended here with a lavish hand; but of the thousands who once tarried within the walls of this ancient city, admiring the cunning and beauty of her ornaments, not one is left. The wind howls forth her desolation, and the Terâbin Arab leads his goats to pasture within her most sacred enclosures.

Near the base of the mound upon which we were, lay one or two large basins hollowed out in solid blocks of stone. Whether they may have been fonts once within the walls of a Greek church, or merely drinking-troughs for cattle, such as you find at this day around the ancient wells in the East, I cannot say; but one of them being slightly ornamented led me to imagine the former supposition probable. At the western extremity of the hill is a mighty mass of most roughly built wall, about twenty feet high and of astonishing thickness, composed solely of chalk-stones of great size, unhewn blocks with sand and rubble filling the interstices, bound, as it were, together with stems of trees with the bark on, some of which project several feet from the present face of the wall. From the presence of this timber, any great

antiquity might, perhaps, be doubted, but the general dryness of the atmosphere, and the fact of its having been inserted with the bark on, might contribute to its preservation for ages. This mass has the appearance of a bulwark thrown up precipitately on an emergency, chalk-stones and sand collected together in a hasty manner, heaped up, and strengthened by the rough boles of tamarisks hurriedly cut in the vale at the base of the hill. Robinson makes no particular mention of this wall, not deeming it, perhaps, so peculiar in its construction as it appeared to me. A large falcon had built its nest amongst the rough masses of chalk; for the city is "wasted, without inhabitant, and the houses without man."

A description of these ruins seems never to have been published, except by Dr. Robinson, and it is highly probable that M. Linant is the only traveller who had visited them before him. Sir F. Henniker, Seetzen, and one or two others speak indeed of ruins somewhere in that direction, but their mention of them is so slight and their description so vague that it cannot be supposed they could have stumbled upon these identical remains; for it is impossible that travellers of such observation and research should have passed them over with a merely slight notice. Neither is it unlikely that, even following the same track as ourselves, and noticing the ancient walls in the plain, the ruins on the hill top, though upon so

elevated a situation, might have escaped observation; for so exactly do they assimilate in colour with the natural rock of which the height is composed, that they might easily be taken as a portion of it.

Our Arabs had not been here before, and rather objected to going, seemingly lest they should meet strange Arabs and be deemed trespassers; for they are extremely jealous of Franks searching amongst such relics of antiquity, being fully impressed with the idea that we are looking for treasure, and have powers of finding it, which *they* themselves do not possess; as if we could turn up a treasure with the same facility as a pig would a truffle.

About a quarter of a mile from the western base of the hill on which are these ruins, there may be seen a deep well, which was the first of a thoroughly eastern style that we had met with, bringing before us the wells so often mentioned in the Scriptures. The wells of the desert are mere springs scooped out in the sand a few feet deep: but here was a well of great depth, doubtless dug with much labour, the interior walls constructed with squared stones, and over the mouth a huge stone laid with a large hole in the centre, the edges of which were worn in many and deep furrows by the continual action of ropes, used in drawing the water for the use of the once great city nigh at hand. Ancient stone troughs also lay around, into which, in ancient times, many a

shepherd maiden had poured the water from her vase to refresh her flock. By letting down a piece of lighted paper, we perceived that the bottom evidently expanded into a large cistern; so that during the rainy season, this cistern becoming full, a good supply was always at hand: it was now perfectly dry. Such wells as this, with the large subterraneous cisterns at the bottom, would, when thus dry, afford excellent places of concealment; and such, probably, was the well in the court of the man's house at Bahurim, down which Jonathan and Ahimaaz descended for concealment when pursued by Absalom, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel. The stone over the mouth would present a favourable, and probably a customary place, over which to throw a cloth to spread corn on, that it might dry in the sun, which from the reflection on the surface of the stone would perform the operation quicker than if merely laid upon the ground. Thus it is said, "The women took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon, and the thing was not known." If this had not been a usual thing to do, it would necessarily have attracted the attention of the pursuers and excited suspicion. Again, this style of well might illustrate the several passages in Scripture where mention is made of rolling back the stone placed upon the mouth of the well: for upon leaving the well, a large rough stone rolled upon the other would easily stop the aperture in the

centre of the lower one, so as to prevent anything falling in, as rubbish, &c.; and I have myself more than once seen the mouth of a well stopped in this manner. Thus, when Jacob journeyed to Haran he beheld a well in the field, "and a great stone was upon the well's mouth;" and "they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place." And afterwards the observation was made that they could not water the sheep "till they roll the stone from the well's mouth: then we water the sheep." And again, "It came to pass when Jacob saw Rachael, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother." Moreover, the stone troughs which are to be noticed at this well at Eboda, as also at the wells at Beersheba and other places, again illustrate the passage in the second chapter of Exodus, where it is said, "Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water and *filled the troughs* to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock." The importance of water, its scarcity, and the labour with which it is obtained in the East, is, moreover, denoted by this act of the shepherds in driving the daughters of Midian away; a proceeding which,

without knowing or taking into consideration the jealous care with which this luxury in the East is necessarily guarded, might seem to the reader a mere act of useless tyranny on the part of the shepherds, which required explanation in the relation of the story. But I, having been driven away myself from a well, and having often felt how much pleasure it would give me to drive others away for my own benefit, can fully comprehend this act of the shepherds, and deem them only to be condemned for lack of gallantry, and that if the intruders had been shepherds instead of shepherdesses, they would have been perfectly justified.

The ruins of Eboda lie about thirty miles south of Gaza, and Dr. Robinson observes, "We had no doubt at the time, nor have I any now, that these were the ruins of the ancient Eboda, or Oboda, a city mentioned only by Ptolemy, and marked on the Peutinger Tables as lying on the Roman road, twenty-three Roman miles to the southward of Elusa, equivalent to nine hours with camels at the usual rate of travel." The Arabs know them by the name of "Aujeh," or "Abdeh."

Turning our backs upon this spot, once clothed with the vine and the olive,—now a wilderness! once adorned with a noble and powerful city,—now a desolate heap of ruins! we proceeded northward for four or five hours, and, after experiencing a most drenching shower, accompanied with thun-

der and lightning, pitched our tents in Wady er Ruhaibeh. The rain was heavy, and the wind cold, so that wrapping my bernoose around me, I gladly sought shelter, whilst the tents were pitching, in a ruined wely or tomb of a deceased santon near at hand. Soon the bright sun again burst through the clouds, and the herbage of the little wady looked quite green and fresh, whilst the air was pure and delightful: so, taking my gun, I wandered up the hill on the left of the valley, and there beheld the widely-extended chaos of ruins "stumbled upon by accident" by Robinson, and which he considers to occupy a tract of ten or twelve acres, but I should have calculated a larger space still. "Once," says he, "this must have been a city of not less than twelve or fifteen thousand inhabitants. Now it is a perfect field of ruins, a scene of unutterable desolation, across which the passing stranger can with difficulty find his way." It is indeed a "scene of unutterable desolation." The manner in which the huge stones once standing here in regular order are now hurled one upon another in the uttermost confusion and disorder, is most striking. Looking around from an elevation in the centre of the ruins, (where probably stood its citadel in the days of its pride,) the city seemed to me to have been enclosed by a wall forming a complete circle.

Amongst the ruins were many curious caverns,

with narrow and choked-up entrances, which, judging from their interior appearance, masonry being visible, may perhaps have once been cisterns. Into several of these I crept; but not without certain quakings, and with my pistol cocked, and the bayonet sprung, deeming it not at all improbable that the proprietor might appear in the shape of a hyæna or wolf, and not receive one with the sacred rites of hospitality. The first of these excavations that I entered strongly justified my suspicions, for I found nothing but bones, fragments of sheepskins, and other remnants of a wild beast's dinner. Seeing a hole leading out of the dining-room apparently to the drawing-room, whither, in all likelihood, the owner of the mansion might have retired, I thought it best, not feeling any inclination to fall in by way of dessert, just to walk out again as quickly as possible, lest I should "beard the Douglas in his hall," and get the worst of it.

On my way back to the encampment, I shot one of the little owls, (strix passerina,) of which bird this spot proved a great resort. "The owl and the raven dwell there:"—"it is a habitation for dragons and a court for owls." This specimen was evidently of very great age, being quite grey and mottled, instead of having the usual dull brown plumage. Being attracted by a noise resembling the chuckling of a hen, amongst the chaos of fallen blocks, and seeking

in the direction from whence it proceeded, I presently descried one of the large Syrian partridges perched upon a stone. Upon my approaching almost within range, it hopped down, and running on a slight distance, made its appearance again upon an elevated block, where remaining until I drew near, it served me the same trick once more; so that, after a vain chase of half an hour, we supped on a tough old pigeon killed the day before, instead of the fine fat object of my late pursuit. By dint of stratagem and perseverance, however, the following morning proved more fatal to these partridges, for two were hanging up in the tent by breakfast time, together with several pigeons, an acceptable provision. This, I presume, is "the bird katta," mentioned by Burckhardt as so numerous in Idumea that the Arabs sometimes kill several at a time, merely by throwing a stick at the flocks of them. We, however, never observed more than two or three together; a circumstance, perhaps, to be accounted for by its being near their season for breeding, when they would naturally abstain from congregating. This bird much resembles the common French red-legged partridge, but is far heavier. Amongst these ruins and in the wady below were many of the little tortoise common in Italy and the south of France; one of which I brought away as a *memento* of Er-Ruhaibeh, and, though exposed to many weeks' rough jolting in saddlebags, and months fraught with the dangers and adversities of travel, "*per-*

tot discrimina rerum," it survived, and lives at this hour in an English green-house—a very travelled tortoise!

Examining the wide field of ruins at Er-Ruhaibeh, our attention was drawn to numerous shafts sunk in the earth, the mouths of which were in many cases neatly masoned with hewn stones. At first we were rather at a loss to account for them, from their great number, and their being disposed in direct lines throughout the city; but intent upon exploring them, we joined some tent-ropes together, and I was allotted to be the first to descend, no very easy matter, as the ropes being small they cut the hand, the only stay to which was afforded by means of tying knots at short distances apart. The mouth of the first thus explored was small, little more than sufficient for the passage of the body. About eighteen feet below the surface I rejoiced at finding a bottom; for my arms were tired, and the sand, running down from above by the action of the rope and of those treading near the edge, nearly blinded me. Upon a lantern being let down, I found myself in a large square cistern, which a mysterious rushing sound warned me was not uninhabited, and visions of the dragons foretold as destined to inhabit the waste places of Idumea rose before me, with doubts as to what might be the correct translation of the word so rendered, when presently they rushed forth in the form of pigeons, and escaped by the shaft. Some rubbish brought in by these birds being set on

fire, the place proved untenanted except by a few bats and one young pigeon. The latter I took possession of, and, after examining the cemented walls, and admiring the numerous small stalactites upon them, I again ascended, and pronounced the work of art a well of ancient days; a conclusion we might have arrived at without descending, for the curb-stones around the mouths of many of these excavations were worn in grooves by the ropes used by the inhabitants to raise the water. We afterwards examined one or two others, but found nothing but pigeons and bats, the latter much resembling the small "horse-shoe" species (*rhinoloplius hipposideros*). Emerging from the last we explored, we found two Arabs, who humbly requested to share in any treasure we should discover. The most remarkable thing upon this ancient site is a large open cistern, of an oval shape, with a flight of steps leading to the bottom, its diameter in length being, as we calculated, about thirty feet, and its depth, perhaps, twelve or more. This is just on the edge of the hill on the western side of the wady, and close on the ruins of the city.

Robinson closes his observations on these remains by saying, the "name Er Ruhaibeh naturally suggests the Hebrew *Rehoboth*, one of Isaac's wells in the vicinity of Gerar; but this appears to have been nothing but a well, and there is no mention in Scripture or elsewhere of any city connected with it. The position of the well, too, would have been much farther

north, and no town of this name is spoken of in all this region. The city probably bore some other name, now utterly forgotten. The ruined wely (santon's tomb) above-mentioned seems to indicate that the place was inhabited, or at least frequented, down to a period considerably later than the Mohammedan conquest."

Having satisfied our curiosity at Er-Ruhaibeh, we left it, to encamp that night in Palestine—to pitch our tents within the proverbial southern boundary of Israel—for *Beersheba* was our next appointed halting-place. Neither was our route thither devoid of interest; for noontide found us eating hard eggs and harder biscuit amongst the ruins of the fallen episcopal city of Elusa, once a city of great magnitude, not the least of those hundred and ninety towns of note recorded as formerly gracing the territories of the promised land: known, too, within the Christian era, as a "proud city of Idumæa," where thousands of the worshippers of the morning star, gathered together within her walls, kept in continual dread the few but faithful followers of Christ. Little, however, is known of her history. As a bishopric she fell probably during the inroads of the Saracens of the seventh century, when the eighteen episcopal cities of "Palestina Tertia" of the Romans bowed with *Petra* to the furious Saracen; whose fanatic hordes, fearless of the stroke of death before their allotted time, rushed

on, shouting the battle cry of "The Koran, the tribute, or the sword," with such devoted valour, that in one administration of no longer a period than ten years, during the early part of the seventh century, thirty-six thousand conquered strong-holds, and four thousand smouldering temples, marked the course of the intrepid followers of the virtuous Omar. Dr. Robinson, it appears, is the first to have drawn aside the veil of eleven centuries' oblivion shrouding the site of Elusa. After noting that the names of its bishops are found in the records of councils as late as A.D. 536, and that about A.D. 600 Antoninus Martyr, upon a journey from Palestina to Sinai, passed her gates, he observes:—"From that time onward until now, an interval of more than eleven centuries, Elusa has remained unmentioned, and its place unknown, until we were thus permitted to rescue it again from this long oblivion."

A large space is covered with her ruins, consisting merely of blocks of hewn stone, with here and there foundations of buildings exposed. At one spot, however, we found two large fragments of columns, and two wells still exist in the vicinity. At one of these we watered; the other, a much smaller one, but of considerable depth, and quite dry, afforded a retreat for bats and pigeons. Between Ruhaibeh and this spot, I had on the journey picked up a chameleon, which seemed to enjoy the intense reflection of the sun from the scattered blocks of Elusa far more than we did;

whereas my little tortoise, when I turned him out to forage for himself, immediately sought shelter beneath a neighbouring stone.

The Arabs know these ruins by the name of "El-Khulasah," which circumstance led Dr. Robinson to recognise them as those of Elusa. Another and greater thrill of interest he throws over them by the passing observation that the Arabic version, in Gen. xx. 1, 2, and xxvi. 1, instead of Gerar, reads "*El-Khulus*;" so that hither we may suppose it was that Abraham bent his footsteps after that sun had set which saw the destruction of the "Cities of the Plain;" after that morning when he gat up early to the place where he stood before the Lord, a zealous but unsuccessful advocate for mercy; for "he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." The Patriarch, it is then related, "journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in *Gerar*." Here it may have been, then, that he forgat his God, fearing that he should be slain for his wife's sake, and thus brought sin and vengeance on Abimelech and on his kingdom: for Abimelech, it is recorded, "King of the Philistines unto Gerar," "sent and took Sarah" upon Abraham's arrival at that city. Again, it was at Gerar that Isaac sinned in a like manner against God, and against Abimelech and his house, as recorded

in the same book. In that narrative an instance of the fertility of the land, and the resources of it and its inhabitants in that age, is produced, to be contrasted by the passing wanderer with its present desert aspect; for is it not said, "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundred-fold; and the Lord blessed him: and the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him?" The valley which we afterwards traversed on our journey that day, between this ancient site and Beersheba, is probably that vale referred to in the same chapter, where, after noticing how the mightiness of Isaac stirred up the envy of Abimelech, it is related that Isaac departed out of the city, and "pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there;" and he "digged wells," and "the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours." The proximity of this ancient site to Beersheba, and its position, with regard both to the latter place and to the "Sea of the Plain," render the above supposition of its being Gerar highly probable. The expression used in the twenty-third verse of the twenty-sixth chapter, where it is said that Isaac, after moving from the neighbourhood of Gerar, "*went up* from thence to Beersheba," may also tend to confirm the supposition, perhaps; for the

ascent from thence to the latter place is, though gradual, very considerable.

The arid desert sands now soon gave place to undulating downs clothed with short grass, and here and there confined plains of pasture, not neglected by the wandering Arab, for upon one of them we left a long range of black tents, apparently well tenanted, whilst flocks and herds were scattered around in great profusion. How grateful a change! how wonderfully refreshing! With what thrilling delight did our eyes rest upon the scanty verdure! Every blade of grass was a banquet to our sight, weary with gazing on boundless seas of scorching sand, chaotic heaps of naked granite. A tract which at other times might have been deemed by us bare and cheerless in aspect, thus proved almost a Paradise.

The sun was fast declining in the west, when, crossing a wide water-course, then dry, though evidently at times a considerable torrent, we found ourselves upon the southern confines of the land of Israel. "Bir-es-Seba! Bir-es-Seba!" cried our Arabs, as riding up the northern bank of the gravelly bed we beheld close at hand a large round well, with numerous ancient drinking-troughs of stone encircling it. Hastily dismounting, we approached, and looking down, beheld at a very considerable depth abundance of water. Deep and numerous grooves, worn in the hard and well-cut stones around the well's mouth, attest how often,

and by what multitudes, that water had been sought in ancient times. Farther westward, at the distance of, perhaps, half a quarter of a mile, there is another well, apparently of the same date as the former, judging by its structure, but of inferior dimensions. Desirous to taste the water of "The Well of the Oath" (as the Hebrew name is said to signify, in record of that oath taken by Abraham with Abimelech, Gen. xxi.), we, tying our tent-cords together, let a bottle down for above forty feet, and drew some, which proved very excellent; particularly so, perhaps, to our palates, which of late had tasted nothing but briny liquid, hardly worthy of the name of water. About these wells the flowers were gay and numerous, chiefly anemones, the flower known in England as the "pheasant's eye," and small dwarf thistles, both pink and yellow.

The frequent mention of Beersheba in the Old Testament throws over the spot we now were on a halo of interest that few other spots so devoid of ancient remains can boast: for here is nothing to be found, speaking of days gone by, excepting these two wells, and nigh at hand upon a northern slope a few scattered stones and foundations of fallen dwellings, marking the site of a village said to have contained, in the fourth century, a Roman garrison. Both Abraham and Isaac dug wells at Beersheba, the latter, probably, merely re-opening those which the Philistines stopped up after the death of Abraham. (Gen. xxvi.)

And it was at Beersheba that it is said of Isaac, "And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well."—"And Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day." (Gen. xxvi.) Again, it was here that the scene of the narrative lies, concerning the manner in which the favoured son of Isaac robbed of his birthright his elder brother. And fleeing from hence it was that Jacob, on his way to Haran, beheld God, and the angels of God, and received the promise, "The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xxviii.) A heritage, not then as now, a type of melancholy and desolation, but a heritage, at the time of the first entry of the promised seed, bearing the description, as we are led to suppose it again shall, of "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of

wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees, and pomegranates and olives; a land wherein they would eat bread without scarceness, and lack not anything in it;" "a land of bread and vineyards; a land of oil olive, and honey;" "a land which the Lord espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands." At Beersheba it was, also, that the Lord renewed his covenant with Israel "in the visions of the night," and commanded him to go down into Egypt, that there he might plant the seed of that great nation of which he was to be the progenitor. But to refer to all the passages of the sacred history which add interest to this site is unavailing: suffice it to notice, that from the period embraced in that history, from the Book of Genesis to that of Nehemiah, the name of Beersheba often occurs; a place to be noted from the time of the swearing of the covenant, to the period when Joshua named it as one of the "uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the coast of Edom southward" (Josh. xv.), as afterwards to that time when the tears of the Jewish exile had ceased to mingle with the waters of Babylon, and the children of Judah again "dwelt from Beersheba unto the valley of Hinnom." (Nehemiah xi. 30.)

Early in the day of our arrival here, we had sent our tents before us with directions as to where we would encamp for the night; and about a mile to the north-east of Beersheba we found them, ready

for our reception, pitched on a little mound overlooking an extensive plain of grass land, with here and there a strip of corn, thin and poor. Upon the way, a body of roving Arabs cut across our course, making for some well-known spot where springs and pasture might afford for a season a tempting resting-place for them, their flocks, and herds. For thus does the primitive Bedouin, like the habitants of that same land four thousand years ago, wander here and there from place to place, in search of pasture, pitching his black goat-hair tents in the same manner, and often, perhaps, upon the self-same spot, as did the patriarchs of old. Leaving the wadys of the desert as soon as the slight vegetation produced by vernal rains has withered beneath the summer's sun, they are unwillingly driven to seek subsistence in the neighbourhood of their despised brethren "of the walls;" yet still clinging to the wilderness, they hover about the skirts of the cultivated district, until the harvest having passed with the month of May, and summer ended with July, the "great heat," or hot season, comes on, lasting from August till October. The plains, which during harvest and the early part of summer were carpeted with rich green grass and gay flowers, refreshed by running rivulets or springs, then are sadly changed: for the grass is withered, the flowers dead, the rivulets and springs dried up, and the distressed tenant of the desert anxiously searches for some sheltered spot

in the mountains where a little vegetation still exists sheltered from the sun; or if they dare do so, they draw near the villages to obtain assistance: for "how do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. For the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field; the rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness."

The party of Nomadic Arabs which thus passed us that morning consisted of at least eighty men, mounted chiefly on camels, though some few bestrode horses. The latter beasts were ragged and small, not noble foals of dams whose pedigrees and virtues are handed down by their Bedouin lords as of the purest blood; nor, perhaps, endued with that sagacity which moved the horse of Abou-el-Marsch, the Arab Chief, to seize his bleeding and fettered master in his teeth, and bear him by his girdle from the hostile Turkish camp to the feet of his lamenting wife and family, whose tears of joy, mingled with floods of grief for the expiring deliverer of their lord, immortalized by Arabian poets, and Lamartine; for

> "There lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
> But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride:
> And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
> And cold as the spray on the rock-beating surf."

Awaking early the following morning, my atten-

tion was attracted (as, lying on my mat, I gazed through the tent door) by a multitude of white objects, giving a tract of corn land, about a quarter of a mile off, much the character of an English church-yard well stocked with tombstones. But presently perceiving one to march away from its position, I seized my telescope, and solved the mystery. Many hundred storks had deceived me, having alighted for a meal, probably, during their migration. The turf around our tents was gayly decked with flowers; for though the "latter rains," which about this season refresh the earth, had not yet commenced, the heavy showers of the winter solstice had prepared the soil for vegetation, which springing forth was now rejoicing beneath the tempered sun, and added much to the pleasure of that day's ride to the village of *Dhoherîyeh*. The hilly country of Judæa, which we now entered, is richly clothed with verdure, low evergreens, and rank grass; whilst beautiful anemones and ranunculuses, with a large flowered thistle which grows in patches with its fine blossom lying close upon the ground, were ruthlessly crushed by the broad feet of our camels.

Dhoherîyeh was the farthest point to which our Tawârah guides were bound by their agreement to accompany us, and therefore some of us rode on a little ahead of the baggage-train to arrange with the shiekh of the village for the means of prosecuting our journey from thence with

the greatest expedition. Reaching the miserable settlement, we sat us down upon a little green tract of sward shaded with olive-trees. A few children and their mothers first appeared, who, gathering round us, stared their fill. Then presently rushed forth from their filthy huts half a dozen most ferocious looking barbarians, one of whom, after much difficulty, we prevailed upon to send for camels to take us on. The rest sat down near us in a ring, and commenced a desperate quarrel amongst themselves; their furious clamour almost stunning, whilst their fierce and extraordinary gestures of rage served to astonish and amuse us. Words and gestures did not long suffice, for presently two gigantic old men rose, and seizing each a huge stone, rushed upon one another, foaming with rage, and "burning one another's grandmothers" for many generations back. Some of their brethren intervening, down they sat again in the circle, but renewed the debate, and once more becoming furiously excited, rose, struggled, and cursed, until their attention was drawn off by the arrival of our train. Then came the "tug of war" on *our* side; for, turning their fiery vehemence on us, they swore that we should not have camels to proceed that day. Neither could we find any court of appeal; for who was sheikh of the village it was difficult to discover for a length of time, and when we did he proved the most hideous and ferocious

ruffian of the set; a man, though but of middling stature, yet of the most herculean frame. He threw back his camel-hair hyke or cloak, and his broad shoulders and chest fully exposed hinted that he would be no pleasant opponent in a struggle. Distorted with rage and fury, for no earthly reason that we were acquainted with, he denied us camels until the following day, and then declared he would take us neither to Hebron nor to Jerusalem, but to Bethlehem. Yet at length, after many hours wasted in dispute, our Tawârah Arabs did prevail upon this Syrian Hercules to offer us nineteen camels and an escort of ten men, but upon most exorbitant conditions, which we at first refused. At last we were fain to make a compromise, by paying half the charge demanded on the spot, and agreeing to pay the remainder at the end of the journey, if deemed fair by the authorities of the place we should reach. Our view now was to get the escort clear away from their hive, and then, forcing them on to Jerusalem, to appeal to our Consul there. Our baggage, during this long and noisy conflict, was heaped upon the ground, and a very sharp look-out was necessary to prevent the crowd around from purloining anything. Chickens and eggs were brought us by the women, with a large and dirty rag embracing several pounds of small dried figs, which, though full of insects and filthy in the extreme, served to add flavour to our ruefully hard biscuit, penetrable only by soaking

in water; and so the rag-bound figs soon disappeared. Our Tawârah guides being paid, and leave taken of them with some regret on our parts, as they had proved faithful and honest, the Dhoherîyeh camels, large ungainly brutes, covered with wounds and bruises, were loaded, and ten fellows of most villanous aspect were allotted to accompany us.

These inhabitants of Dhoherîyeh bore as arms short knotted clubs, some of them with spikes driven into the head, and one I observed a perfect mace of iron. Knives, or rather short sabres, with the usual shabby and rough-made wooden sheaths, kept together by string, were also in every belt, and here and there an old long-barrelled pistol. The shades of evening were fast approaching, when, shaking the dust from off our feet, we bade adieu to their inhospitable village. Pursuing our course towards Bethlehem for about the space of two hours, enlivened by furious altercations betwixt our servants and our guides, on account of repeated accidents happening to the baggage and the fierce obstinacy of the escort, we reached a flat green plain at the bottom of a basin encircled by hills, thickly covered with shrubs and stunted pine, where we gladly pitched our tents. But it proved an ill-chosen site, both for health and comfort; for the ground was damp, and rife with unwholesome vapours at nightfall, neither was there any spring at hand to replenish our exhausted stock of water;

so that, wearied and hungry, we were compelled to wait until one of our sulky Syrians returned from a well, which, judging by his lengthened absence, must have been at a very considerable distance. A slight and simple repast soon cheered us again.

It was a night beyond conception lovely, and from amidst the thick bushes of evergreen, the dark masses of which were thrown out by a brilliant moon, the sweet harmony of a bird somewhat relieved the excessive stillness of the evening. Seating myself upon a fragment of rock, whilst meditating upon our peculiar and exciting situation, Milton's beautiful description rose to my mind:—

> ——————— "Now is the pleasant time,
> The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
> To the night-warbling bird, that now awake,
> Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
> Full orbed the moon, and with more pleasing light,
> Shadowy sets off the face of things."

But the falling dew, and the expiring ashes of Ladikiè in the bowl of my chibook, soon warned me to seek my mat, far more inclined to be pleased with the scenery of the "hill country of Judæa" than with its inhabitants.

The caroling of birds and the perfumed air reminded us the following morning that we had left the rude sublimity of the desert, with its boundless views and death-like silence, for a country where the soul, ever seeking variety, might

feast with renewed delight upon scenery beautiful and pleasing, the eye gladly yielding the liberty of an unlimited range for the pleasure of sporting midst the delightful colours and refreshing verdure of a more confined landscape, enlivened by the music of birds, and fragrant with the scent of flowers. Rising with the sun, I wandered about the mountain slopes, revelling in the novelty of the scene, and diving into groves of arbutus and other evergreens, watching and listening to the numerous warblers haunting them. Amongst the flowers, the cyclamen was most luxuriant and beautiful, growing beneath the shade of masses of rock, and apparently flourishing more luxuriantly than even in Italy. That fair country rose before me as I gazed upon this flower, and the wooded glens and hills of Judæa cried aloud for a Salvator Rosa.

Only six of our new guides were forthcoming this morning, the others having fled during the night season. Our route now lay along the edge of a little valley, where grew small patches of barley and bearded wheat. The hills showed evident signs of ancient terraces, where stones piled up once sustained space above space, laden with the olive, vine, and fig; but the stones thereof now "poured down into the valley," and the soil carried off by the rains, the hill-sides have again, in most places, resumed their natural slope: for "the land mourns and is laid waste," the

pomegranate is choked by the thistle and the thorn. Yet did we pass through one extensive valley, (Hebron lying some miles upon our right,) where vineyards, rich and flourishing, with intermingled figs and olives, attested the natural virtues of the soil, and that though "the glory of Jacob" is "made thin," and "the fatness of his flesh waxed lean," yet is there left, "as the shaking of an olive-tree and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done." And again, when the black cloud of the curse is withdrawn, shall fertility spring forth, and "the mirth of the tabret, the noise of them that rejoice, and the joy of the harp," be renewed; and the cry shall be heard, "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, and desolate, and ruined cities, are become fenced and inhabited."

Avoiding Hebron, for fear of quarantine, we pursued our course toward Jerusalem, now not many hours distant. Our guides protested that nothing should lead them to approach that city, lest they should be put into quarantine, and announced their intentions (not "sotto voce," by any means) of forcing us to go to Bethlehem. Neither was their temper by any means improved through an unfortunate accident which happened by the way; for one of the servants, a sullen, ill-conditioned Egyptian, having fallen out with one of the Syrians, by way of finishing the discussion, threw a stone at the head of the latter, which he

wisely avoiding, the missile literally cut his camel's eye out. Yet did not this poor animal show the slightest proof of suffering, but kept on its course with its heavy burthen, hour after hour, not flagging in the least. The villain Egyptian shewed some regret, indeed, for the atrocious accident, but only, it appeared to me, because it was the camel's and not his adversary's eye that he had thus victimized.

Arrived at the spot where the Bethlehem road branched off from the direct one to Jerusalem, not far from the pools of Solomon, which we had just left behind us, we gave forth the order to proceed straight forward for the "Holy City," backing it, at the same time, with a threat of firing on the first man that strove to go the Bethlehem road. The uproar was great, and our beards devoted to perdition, as usual; but dismounting from our camels, we drove both them and our guides onward until they found that further opposition was useless. At one time, two of the latter, hanging back, were evidently making off in the direction of Bethlehem; but happening to be behind, I levelled my gun at them, not listening to the cry of "Moyé," which they raised in order that I should suppose they were merely seeking for a spring, and they unwillingly returned to the direct road.

Upon the summit of a prickly oak near the road-side we noticed this day one of those most

exquisitely beautiful birds called "*rollers*," and as it sat, its brilliant plumage glistening in the sun, it warbled forth a song, which very much surprised me, not being at all aware that the "roller" had any musical note at all: neither have I since ever met with one that produced any other note than a cawing sound very similar to that of the jackdaw, though I have seen thousands of this bird in Syria and Asia Minor, particularly in the latter country, where, amongst the ancient walls of Nice, in Bithynia, they breed in great multitudes during the month of July. This one, being disturbed in its song, flew down into a valley below, whither I pursued it, and obtained it as a specimen.

Leaving Bethlehem to our right, about three o'clock in the afternoon, "Ecco! El-Kuds!" was shouted forth by one of our servants a-head, and, reaching a little ridge of hill, we gazed across the "Valley of the Giants," and beheld, indeed, the embattled walls of the "Daughter of Sion" encircled by barrenness and sterility.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JERUSALEM.

Enter Jerusalem.—Quarantine.—Stewed Israelitish garment.——Head Officer of Quarantine-Establishment.—Courtesy of Mr. Young, the British Consul.—Dogs.—Temple of Solomon.—Mount of Olives.—Absalom's Tomb.—"The Field of Blood."—Vale of Gihon.—Black fetid limestone.

THE aspect of the "Holy City" from the spot where first we greeted her is striking, but melancholy, not beautiful, not presenting "a magnificent assemblage of domes, towers, palaces, churches, and monasteries." Dr. Clarke, indeed, who thus speaks of her appearance, drew towards her on a far more favourable side, from whence her aspect is truly at times wonderfully pleasant. But who can gaze for the first time from any point upon this spot, most sacred in a highly consecrated land, without the mingled feeling in his bosom so well described by the sublime pen of Torquato Tasso, who, in the "Iliad of Italy," paints the joyful shouts and transports of delight of Godfrey's approaching host, as in each beating breast giving place to holy sorrow and an humbled heart?—

"Al gran piacer che quella prima vista
Dolcemente spirò nell' altrui petto,
Alta contrizïon successe, mista
Di timoroso e riverente affetto.
Osano appena d'innalzar la vista
Ver la città de Cristo albergo eletto,
Dove morì, dove sepolto fue,
Dove poi rivestì le membra sue!"

Skirting the foot of the mountain that "lieth before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom," and "which is in the Valley of Giants on the north," we halted on the margin of that deep ravine, the Vale of Gihon, beneath some ancient olive-trees nigh unto the "Lower Pool of Gihon," a vast but dried-up reservoir.

Some of the party rode forward to discover whether we should have quarantine to perform, our Dhoherîyehans refusing to proceed to the gates without being satisfied on that point. The return of one of the messengers to the top of the hill, making signs to move on, seemed now to satisfy them all was right; therefore, ascending the steep acclivity, we entered the Jaffa Gate, and all were doomed to quarantine,—including, of course, our guides, whose rage and mortification at being thus duped caused us much amusement. Their detention was satisfactory, too; for, having them now fully in our power, we could at our ease get the advice of our Consul regarding their exorbitant imposition as to the price of the camels, and, moreover, punish them for their unruly behaviour by the way.

A guard of wretched-looking Turkish soldiers was loitering about the gateway as we passed beneath its noble tower. Dirty and ill-clothed, they lounged about in the most unmilitary manner, regarding our curious mixture of costume and wayworn appearance with a vacant stare, as, halting for a moment for a guide, we stroked our beards with satisfaction that now we had arrived at that goal towards which we had so long and anxiously been looking. Above thirty days of travel in the desert had not, indeed, much improved our outward appearance, I suspect. As for myself, the sun and hot sand had thrice taken the skin from off my face, and left me bronzed as any Bedouin; whilst our beards would have made the heart of Tertullian leap within him, hating, as he did, "a lie against our faces, and an impious attempt to improve the works of the Creator."

Led onward through narrow streets, having turned to the left nigh unto an ancient tank called by some Bathsheba's Bath, exclaiming within ourselves, "Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?" we arrived at an open plot which seemed the public receptacle for the scrapings and off-scourings of the town, and dedicated wholly to dogs, herds of which were revelling midst heaps of canine luxuries. A low wall of rough stones surrounded this place, and in one corner was a portion of what was once a mosque, the old

wooden door of which, being opened by our conductor, a damp and musty smell issued forth, as if it were full of dead men's bones. Entering, we found a chamber of some thirty feet square, with a domed ceiling and walls which had originally been white, but now were green, whilst the floor was nothing more than the bare earth covered with vermin and dirt. Revolting as this was for an abiding-place, yet experience having taught us how sovereign a remedy is patience, especially to travellers, each of us, with a *mens immota*, chose his resting-place, either spreading his mat within the building, or pitching his tent outside, midst live dogs, dead cats, and other offal. In order that fasting should not create disquietness of soul, we then sent foragers into the city; so that soon were spread before us numerous cocks and hens tied together by the legs, and wines of Greece and Italy from a Maltese shop in the neighbourhood. Thus, in the course of an hour or two after our arrival, we were ranged around a most dainty-looking dish of fricasee, fit, in our eyes, for a Vitellian banquet; when lo! a fork, diving into it to seek its substance, came forth again laden with something of most ambiguous aspect, which, gradually drawn out dripping with rich gravy, proclaimed itself a remnant of an old worn-out surtout! Repugnance overcame our appetites, and each with a deep groan sank back, until, the rage of disappointed hunger rousing us,

we shouted for our "venter deus" to explain the loathsome dish, and why the art of cookery was thus debased. There being a slight wind, the cooking-fire had been made close under the wall of our *pleasure*-ground, from the top of which this remnant of an Israelitish garment was blown into the seething-pot, and thus, after being duly stewed, was laid before us in the lordly dish, temptingly bedecked with rice and chicken-bones. Drowning our feelings in Cyprian wine, "*curas edaces dissipat Evius*," we laid us down at an early hour to rest, which, in spite of loss of dinner and other grievances, we should have soon enjoyed, had not the dogs, immediately after dark, come rushing in, to spend the livelong night in fighting over their supper, howling thanksgivings for their copious supply, and thus robbing us of seasonable sleep.

The following morning, whilst we were smoking our chibooks, with a vain hope of purifying the nauseous atmosphere we were doomed to breathe, a sprightly-looking gentleman marched up to the door of our miserable abode with an air of considerable consequence, and, saluting us, made us aware that we were in the presence of the head officer of the quarantine-establishment of the great city of "*El-Kuds*." Returning courteously his "Ben venuto," we commenced searching inquiries as to whether the *Terra Santa* establishments were all as well regulated and in as comfortable a condition as that, the delights of

which we were now partaking of; and whether way-worn travellers were always consigned to the jaws of ravenous dogs, and to the grand filth-depôt of the Holy City, when arrived within her walls. He assured us, that, he felt very acutely and deeply regretted our unenviable situation, but that he could not possibly assist us, ardent as was his affection for all Europeans, especially for ourselves! Having delivered himself of this with much feeling, we sat the great man down upon an old travelling-trunk, and insinuated between his lips the amber-headed mouth-piece of a pipe well filled with the fragrant weed of Ladikiè: then, opening upon him a fresh battery, we hinted that it might be worth his while to allow us to pass our time of purification in some more wholesome spot, and that, perhaps, the Latin Convent of St. Salvador would afford us a room within its precincts to spend a nominal quarantine. Evidently intoxicated with visions of foes, he expressed again his desire to satisfy our reasonable wishes, and reiterating his excess of affection for us, marched off with the highly polished buttons of his military coat glistening in the sun, and his head, adorned with the scarlet military Turkish cap, high in air, to take into consideration the propriety of procuring a lodging for us. Soon after his departure, we were delighted to receive notice by a Janizary that our Consul, Mr. Young, to whom some of us had letters, was on the point of paying us a visit.

Through the kind attention of that most estimable gentleman, we obtained leave to search for lodgings; and, failing in finding any, we were most courteously permitted by him to pitch our tents within an enclosure at the back of his house, which the following morning we did with the greatest alacrity, and, bidding adieu to our vile limbo, found ourselves comfortably enough established in our new situation; the lofty wall of the city sheltering us considerably from the wind, whilst an olive-tree or two afforded a grateful screen against the sun. One enemy alone annoyed us here, and that was one which, from Dan to Beersheba, plagues the traveller in the East, for no spot can he find that is free from dogs. Like Bishop Hatto's rats, they besiege him on every side: during the day they hover round his tents, eager for anything that may be cast aside, and during the night they often actually rush into the ill-closed entrance of his canvass habitation, and bear off the spoil with the greatest boldness and celerity. More than once during my eastern peregrinations have I, aroused by a scrambling near my mat, started from my sleep to behold with the greatest indignation a mangy cur bolting out of my tent-door with a portion of cold kid, or other delicate morsel, betwixt his hungry jaws; and more than once have I closed their career of rapine with a bullet. Well I remember one night, when encamped amongst the magnificent remains of the Temple of the Sun, at Baalbec, the Heliopolis of old,

having so arranged the cords of my tent-door as to entangle any nocturnal intruder, my slumbers were broken in upon in the dead hour of night by a mysterious snuffing and short breathing near the knapsack which formed my pillow. Starting up and seizing my pistols, I saw one of my canine enemies, a huge shaggy fellow, breaking cover, but in his haste to escape becoming entangled by the leg in my trap of tent-cords, where he would certainly have been sacrificed had not a friend's tent, exactly opposite, prevented me from firing at him until he had disengaged himself and run so far that the certainty of the shot was spoilt, the bullet merely administering a severe graze upon his hinder quarters, as a slight memento of the failure of his robber-scheme, and the consequent loss of his supper, which in the shape of half a cold chicken, he dropped in his contest with the tent-ropes. "*Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra*," "Many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," thought I, as, picking up the prize, I deposited it in safety, and threw myself upon my mat again.

But to return to Jerusalem. It is as well, perhaps, to mention, before entering upon more interesting topics, that we embraced the first opportunity of relating to our Consul the particulars of our contract with the sheikh of Dhoherîych, and the manner in which the escort which he gave us had deserted on the way, leaving only the three individuals who were now in quarantine, to represent them. Nei-

ther were we much surprised to learn that the payment for the camels, insisted on by the sheikh, was ridiculously exorbitant, and that even by paying him the half of the sum he mentioned, we had already overpaid him, and ought not to think of giving anything further. We, consequently, let the three Dhoherîyehans depart for their native village (after suffering their quarantine imprisonment) without presenting them with any backsheesh, which brought upon our heads not only the bitterest curses they could conjure up at the time, but the fierce vengeance, at a future period, of their shiekh, the particulars of which, with its consequences, will be related in its proper place.

After the settlement of this affair, we turned our attention to the highly sanctified ground which we now trod,—to those spots, within and in the immediate vicinity of the ancient metropolis of Judæa, which tradition might point to, with any apparent truth, as more particularly contributing to that deep and thrilling interest, which in the heart of every Christian must of necessity overshadow the whole extent of the land of Israel, but how much more especially must concentrate at that holy site where the footsteps of the God of Israel, when here on earth, may almost be traced; the undoubted scene of many of his most wondrous deeds working towards the redemption of the world, and, finally, the undoubted theatre of his sufferings to perfect that one great end.

The shadow of sanctity thus overspreads the whole, and the believer feels, and trembles as he feels, that the ground whereon he treads is surely "holy ground:" but after visiting, I may say, nearly all the spots to which the notice of the Christian is peculiarly attracted with the hope that something may there be found to realize the belief that some great incident, with which from his most youthful days he has been familiar, may have had its scene at that precise point, I yet must say, that at one alone did I find myself lingering with any increase of that deep interest which pervades the whole, an interest to be perhaps conceived, but not described. *Monkish* tradition here finds scope enough, indeed, to feed and exercise its overwhelming thirst for lies; and too surely does it assist in swamping *that* tradition which might be found to be based on truth, if not thus clouded and stifled by its horrid atmosphere of mockery. The one spot which I say thus arrested more especially my attention, was beside the enormous bevelled stones forming a portion of the south-west area wall of that magnificent structure raised by the Caliph Omar, heedless of the deep curses of the patriarch Sophronius, when, in the year of our Lord 637, the victorious Saracens, contemning the deep valleys and strong walls defending *Œlia*, impiously forced the Christian garrison to yield, and proclaimed within her sacred precincts, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is

his Prophet." For I am led to believe, and I felt then impressed with the opinion urged by Dr. Robinson, that that portion of the wall where are these huge stones is, in all probability, of Jewish construction, and that, as to the particular spot where these stones evidently once formed a portion of a vast arch, (as proved by their present position and curved form,) the hypothesis of the learned Professor, that there stood the bridge which spanned, according to Josephus, the space between the Holy Temple and the Xystus on Mount Zion,* may be well founded: and thus I felt somewhat convinced that the "house which King Solomon built for the Lord" may indeed have stood upon this site, and that some trace of the original walls enclosing its vast area is still visible; the Professor's arguments on this point apparently not clashing with the account given by the Jewish historian of the situation of the Temple, and the position of its courts and walls.

But now let us bid adieu to this interesting site, and hastening by the Moslem's pride, the Mosque of Omar, pass beneath the *Báb-es-Sûbat*, or St. Stephen's Gate, as it is generally denominated, being the eastern gate of the four gates of the modern city, facing the four cardinal points, viz., the "Damascus Gate, or Gate of the Pillar," to

* De Bell. 1. 7. 2.
Ib. 2. 16. 3.
Ib. 6. 6. 2.
De Bell. 6. 8. 1.
Antiq. 14. 4. 2.

the north; the "Gate of Zion, or of the Prophet David," to the south; that of "St. Stephen, or Gate of the Tribes," to the east; and, to the west, the Hebron Gate, or Gate Bethlehem, of Jaffa, or, as it is also called, the "Gate of the Pilgrims." Many other gates of high antiquity, but now closed, are also to be observed, the most noted of which is the Golden Gate, in the eastern wall of the city. Not far from this last is pointed out a stone springing from the wall, where, says the Moslem, Mahomet will sit in that day foretold by the prophet Joel, when God will gather in the valley below, (the Vale of Jehoshaphat,) all nations together, and plead with them for the scattered of Israel.

The sun shone brightly over the western slope of the Mount of Olives as, early in the day, we passed through St. Stephen's Gate, and, resting for a moment on the brow of the descent into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, looked down upon the bed of that brook which our Saviour had so often crossed, and beheld upon its opposite bank the ancient olive-trees, descendants of those which graced the garden that he loved—the Garden of Gethsemane—that spot where, in retirement, he communed with his Father in heaven, and with his humble followers and apostles: that sacred spot, of which the Evangelist says, "Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples;" and where the traitor Judas proved himself the chosen instrument to bring the Lamb to the slaughter.

Proceeding down the steep side of the valley, we crossed the little bridge which spans the ancient bed of the brook, at that time perfectly dry; and, leaving the tomb of the Holy Family, (as Greeks and Moslems are pleased to consider a square sunken court, with several excavations in it, and a chapel;) we reached the loose stone wall surrounding the Garden of Gethsemane. The olive-trees upon this spot are doubtless of great antiquity; for the olive, where it flourishes, (as these evidently have done, being fine-grown trees,) preserves its firm and healthy appearance for between two and three hundred years, it is said, without presenting that gnarled and worn trunk which those of the Garden of Gethsemane possess. The trees are but few, perhaps a dozen, certainly not more, within the enclosure. Following a narrow path between two walls, we found the end closed, and, inquiring the reason, were informed that that was the accursed spot where the betrayer of Jesus said, "Hail, Master, and kissed him."

The heat was very great, as wending our way up the rugged path we sought to gain the Church of the Ascension on the central summit of Olivet, where at last we arrived; but not without having tarried a moment at that spot pointed out as where the Son of God wept over the fate of the beloved city, "the joy of the whole earth," beholding Zion with his prophetic vision, "as a ploughed field,

and Jerusalem heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." (Micah iii. 12.) Yes! that glorious city, with her domes and palaces presenting a noble panorama, a city rejoicing in her strength and her unequalled beauty; to all other eyes a very emblem of eternal prosperity, "the vision of peace," (as its Jebusite name intended,) rejoicing in a well-regulated government, in quietude and rest, free from external enemies and internal factions; to *those* inspired eyes then gazing on her, lay enveloped in devouring fire, besieged by a fierce army, "a nation from afar, from the end of the earth, a nation whose tongue they understood not, a nation of fierce countenance, who would not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young;" her inhabitants, frenzied by fierce dissensions, faction striving against faction, robbers, and zealots; blood drenching the very altars, brother contending with brother in ferocious combat, father with son, "Those eyes beheld them that did feed delicately desolate in the streets; them that were brought up in scarlet embracing dunghills;"—"the hands of the pitiful women soddening their own children;" the whole city wrapped in fury, unheard of calamity, and dreadful tribulation; the abomination of desolation nigh at hand! For to him "the days of vengeance" were present, and "*his* blood was on them and on their children."

The Church of the Ascension, which we had

now reached, is a small domed building of no merit. Within is shewn the last footstep of our blessed Lord on earth, imprinted on a stone. It is a single print: its fellow once was there, it is said, but now is placed within the Mosque of Omar. Helena raised upon this summit of Mount Olivet* a church of considerable magnitude and beauty: the Moslem transformed it into the present paltry mosque.

Turning our faces towards the city again, we descended the Mount in a south-westerly direction, crossing that part of it which has been named the "Mount of Corruption," as being the spot where "Solomon did build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Moloch, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods." (1 Kings xi. 7, 8.) By the way several spots that monkish superstition and tradition have set their stamp upon were pointed out to us; but, crossing the road to Bethany, (a stony rugged path,) we soon reached the base of the hill at that point where, upon the borders of the brook Kedron, stand those curious monuments known as the tombs of Absalom, Zacharias, Jehoshaphat, and St. James. That of the last is a

* The elevation of this central summit of Olivet is given by Schubert, according to Dr. Robinson, at 2,556 Paris feet above the sea, and 416 above the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

mere sepulchral chamber, ornamented with Doric pillars; but those of the two former are more striking, being masses of the natural rock left isolated, in their original position, the rock around being cut away. The form of that of Absalom is square, surmounted with a pointed dome of masonry. The ornaments of the base are mingled Doric and Ionic, columns and pilasters of the latter style of architecture gracing its façades, but with Doric frieze and ornaments above. Monolithic tombs of much the same mixed style have been observed at Petra by several travellers, and are attributed to a late period of the Greek and Roman art by Dr. Robinson: but I am inclined to view this as a tomb of high antiquity, the mingled ornaments of which have been added at different periods in posterior ages. That it occupies the site of the pillar which Absalom "reared up for himself in the King's Dale," and "called after his own name," is not, however, very probable, though that pillar, it may be supposed, stood somewhere in this neighbourhood. That it is the very sepulchre of the rebellious son of David there is not the slightest foundation for supposing: for where he fell, thrust through by Joab's darts, was in the wood of Ephraim; "and they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him." But, as this monument of antiquity in the Vale of Jehoshaphat serves as a memento of that pillar which he

raised in his lifetime "in the King's Dale" (supposed with reason to be the same valley), we, regarding it as a record of filial rebellion and ingratitude, with the passing Moslem, testified our abomination in the usual manner, by hurling a stone at it. The tomb of Zacharias much resembles the above, except in its being devoid of Doric ornament and confined to the Ionic and Egyptian styles. It is at this point that the valley of Jehoshaphat, properly so called, and the valley of Siloam meet, presenting at their junction a narrow ravine.

High upon our left, the miserable village of Siloam appeared, perched upon the steep hill side: but we did not visit it, though numerous excavations in the rocks about it, of high antiquity, render it worthy of examination. Now were we passing over a vast space strewed with stones carved with Hebrew characters, for it is the burial-place of the Jews; that spot where, above all others, the son of Israel aspires to lay his bones, there surely trusting to hear, at the last day, the blast of the trumpet echoing through the valley of Jehoshaphat, and mingling with the cry of the archangel, "Let the Heathen be awakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the Heathen round about!" "Come, get you down, multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of

decision!" For "then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more; and it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." From the most remote corners of the earth, many a family, wretched representatives of God's chosen people, regardless of danger, poverty, and toil, still press forward to Zion, that at the foot of God's holy mount the aged patriarch may mingle his bones with those of his brethren in the sacred vale; a privilege not to be obtained by the toil and danger of pilgrimage alone, but, moreover, by a great price paid by the rightful owner of the heritage to the "worst of the Heathen," who now possess it.

Traversing this humble burial-place, and crossing the valley to—

> "Siloa's brook that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God,"

we spent a few moments beside its pool, which Maundrell found desecrated by a filthy tanner there dressing his hides; but little water was in it at this time; then did we cross the "King's Gardens," being the point where the vales of Jehoshaphat, Tyropœon, and Ben-Hinnom meet; a goodly spot enough, at this day verdant, and with groves of fig and mulberry-trees, one of which

latter, nigh the pool of Siloam, is shown as marking the spot where the Prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder. Visiting the well of Nehemiah, we sought the "potter's field," the "aceldama, that is to say, the field of blood," upon the northern slope of "the hill of evil counsel," a spot that tradition has clung to from a very early period, and Christians and Pagans have regarded with great veneration. "Honest Maundrell" tells us that, in 1696, he found here a charnel-house, into which the corpses were let down from the top, there being five holes left open for that purpose, "looking through which," says he, "we could see many bodies under several degrees of decay; from which it may be conjectured that this grave does not make that quick despatch with the corpses committed to it which is commonly reported:" the report which he thus alludes to being that of the quick-consuming property of the soil, which in four-and-twenty hours was said to destroy a corpse: and in the thirteenth century it often formed the cargo of ships of Pisa, bearing it away to be spread within the celebrated Campo Santo of that city. The Armenians hired this burial-plot and house of the Turks in Maundrell's time, paying for the right of use a sequin a-day. The same people seem also to have held it when Pococke was there. Now it is deserted, and the building has disappeared. Nigh at hand are multitudes of tombs in the rock, generally of small dimensions, the ornaments and

inscriptions on some of the most remarkable of which have been noticed and described by Clarke and other learned travellers.

Continuing our course along the southern bank of the valley of Hinnom, and leaving behind us the "high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the Son of Hinnom," where the children of Judah worked abomination in the sight of the Lord, burning their sons and daughters in the fire to Moloch, the god of the Ammonites; we, following it in its northern course, arrived at the "lower pool of Gihon," or as many have named it, "Bathsheba's Pool," a vast tank formed by strong dams of earth and stone thrown across the valley. Its length, according to the measurement of Dr. Robinson, is 592 English feet, and its greatest breadth, 275 English feet, whilst the depth at the south end is forty-two feet, being considerably larger than the upper pool which lies near the commencement of the valley of Gihon, north of the Jaffa-gate, which valley widens into, and takes the name of the valley of Hinnom, just below the lower pool, at the south-west foot of Zion. This vale of Gihon is narrow, but not wholly destitute of beauty, being in some parts clothed with olive-trees, particularly near the Bethlehem Gate. Towards that gate we now turned by the road by which we had first entered the Holy City; and, passing within it, we, after taking a cursory view of the exterior of a castellated building of

considerable magnitude, bearing the title of "David's Palace," once more sought our tents.

We found awaiting our arrival a Jewish vender of relics, chiefly consisting of necklaces formed of the stones of olive-berries from Olivet, and crucifixes from the same spot, with other articles much sought after by pilgrims, such as the large mother-of-pearl shells from the Red Sea, carved with holy legends, which are bought with avidity by the Greek women, whom I have, in Smyrna, seen wearing them as clasps to the zone. They are said to have been used anciently as symbols of Astarte, the Syrian Venus. Necklaces of Mecca-fruit are also much purchased in Jerusalem by pilgrims. These ornaments are of divers colours, but originally white, being cut from a glutinous substance forming the interior of the fruit of a species of palm, which, when exposed to the air, hardens, and stained of a chosen colour by the maker of the beads, which are strung in rosaries for the Moslem, composed of ninety-nine beads to answer to their ninety-nine attributes of the Deity. By far the most curious things in the collection offered us were crosses, cups, and amulets, cut out of the black fetid lime-stone from the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, which upon friction sends forth a strong unpleasant smell, owing, it is said, to the presence of sulphurated hydrogen. Amulets of this same substance are stated to have been discovered in the pyramids of Sachara in Egypt: and, being considered excellent

preventatives against the plague, articles composed of this limestone are in high esteem. Within the cups I purchased, are neatly engraved in Arabic characters, certain extracts from the Koran. This kind of stone presents a white exterior in its natural state, but when cut, the interior proves perfectly black, and of a substance readily giving way to the knife. Near the Asphaltic Lake, we afterwards picked up specimens; and there observed also considerable quantities in large masses. Many of the relics, manufactured in the Holy City, and at Bethlehem, (where the shells are chiefly carved,) find their way to Spain, Italy, and other Catholic countries, being exported in ship-loads from the Holy Land; each of the articles receiving, before departing from the hand of the manufacturer to the public grasp, a blessing at the Holy Sepulchre.

CHAPTER XXV.

JERUSALEM.

Easter Festival.—Holy Sepulchre.—Crusades.—Nox tenebrosa.—Merops Apiaster.—Incident.—Struggle with a Nubian.—Retire with spoil.

The evening of the day that we had thus taken our first ramble without the walls of Jerusalem was most beautiful. The sun was fast declining, when, after a slight repast, I mounted a flight of steps, leading to the top of the city wall, close to our tents, where pacing up and down upon the broad walk which runs around the whole city, guarded by the battlements upon the outer side, I gazed upon the extensive view stretching northward of Jerusalem, towards the hills of Ramah, at that hour rendered almost beautiful, in spite of barren rocky soil, by the softening light of evening. The foreground of this view is much relieved by groves of olive-trees with here and there a terebinth, affording to the inhabitants luxurious shade, enjoying which they wander over the northern portion of the site of the ancient city in meditative solitude, or lounge with their friends and families upon the banks and knolls. Such groups enlivened the scene this

evening; light-hearted noisy Greeks making her groves ring with clamorous merriment; grave Armenians marching on, staid in gait and sad in habit, strongly contrasting with the flippant, gaudy, son of Greece, the metal "*dawayeh*," or ink-horn, within the shawl binding their loose tunic, taking the place of the long-barrelled pistols and treacherous daggers which grace the girdle of the snowy "*kamys*." Then came the melancholy Jew, as sad in aspect as in dress, humbly standing aside to let the scornful Turk, his oppressor, pass by haughtily; whilst now and then, but very rarely, might be seen a wild son of the desert, from the neighbourhood of Jericho and the banks of Jordan, cantering by upon a ragged steed, with rich-fringed scarf bound carelessly around his head, flying in the wind, the rude sabre knife in his girdle, and an enormously long lance in hand. I saw but one such figure pass this evening, and he, dashing his shovel stirrups in his horse's ribs, galloped off as if he felt himself out of bounds: indeed, it is but rarely that the wild Arab of the Syrian desert is to be seen in full costume so close to Jerusalem; for they have many sins to answer for to the Pasha, and therefore generally avoid attracting attention. Beneath a large and beautiful terebinth, near the north-west corner of the city wall, one group excited my attention more particularly this evening: it was chiefly composed of Turkish women, several of them evidently young, and apparently fair, as far as it was possible to judge

from the small portion of the face the jealous *borcho*, or veil, left exposed.

The city now was swarming with pilgrims, for it was the great festival of Easter, at which season thousands flock from countries far distant, from Morocco and from Russia, Spain, Italy, and Turkey, Greece and Egypt, to tread in the steps of Christ, to follow them to his tomb within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; around which spot (in their minds the most radiant with sanctity) they herd, Christians of all sects, to profane that title, and the shrine, with revolting mummery and furious contentions as to vain points of belief and as to precedency of place during the idle ceremonies; making that which they regard as a holy temple a den, if not of thieves yet certainly of ruffians, Latins and Greeks, Armenians and Copts, not content with venting their hatred for one another in looks and motions of scornful pride, but often proceeding to furious blows: or, if it is carried on with more than usual peace, religious hatred relaxes into indecency, and it is as Pococke has observed, "more like a society of Bacchanals than a Christian assembly." Such is the disgraceful exhibition which takes place upon the Greeks' Easter eve, when the ceremony of distributing "the holy fire" is gone through; a ceremony founded upon a persuasion that at that season a miraculous flame descends from heaven into the Holy Sepulchre and kindles there the lamps. Pilgrims often bring their shrouds with them to be bedaubed with the wax

running from the tapers thus lighted with the holy fire; and then do they believe the gates of heaven assuredly must open to them. Thus a Greek with me snapped his fingers at the perils of Gehenna, as he triumphantly exhibited an old handkerchief well besmutted and begreased with holy smoke and wax.

Upon the evening of Good Friday we visited the Holy Sepulchre, accompanied by the Consul's Janizary, to see the ceremony of the "*nox tenebrosa*," which is observed with great solemnity at that season, and the details of which both Sandys, Maundrell, and others have dilated on with such nicety, and later travellers copied from them, that but a slight notice of the proceedings may be inserted here: indeed, such a tissue of mummery and mockery does it appear to the ceremony-hating Protestant, that, unless for its peculiarity and the interesting site upon which it is gone through, it would not be worthy of record. We found the doors of the Church closed upon our arrival, being too early, which gave us time to view the façade of this celebrated edifice. This is, indeed, almost the only portion of the exterior that can be examined, so many buildings are there annexed to its walls on all sides excepting at this point, where you find a square and open court, much resorted to by traffickers in beads, shells, and other esteemed articles of that nature, and at the farthest end of which, from a raised terrace, may be obtained the fairest view of the building.

It presents nothing very striking, though the double-arched gateway, of the Saracenic style of architecture, with the *basso relievo* above the portal, is worthy of a moment's examination. If there is nothing very striking, however, in the exterior aspect of this far-famed structure, still does its venerable air arrest the eye and engage the thought of him who for the first time stands within its courts. As to the style and details of the architecture, let the curious turn to Chateaubriand. Whether the learned Frenchman is correct in his opinion, accordant, indeed, with the general supposition of the genuineness of this site, which the vivid imagination of the zealous Helena led her to believe was revealed supernaturally, in spite of "the strenuous efforts of the whole race of demons, through the instrumentality of impious men, to deliver over that illustrious monument of immortality to darkness and oblivion," as related by Eusebius, I leave to be discussed by abler pens, wielded by those who have talent, time, and opportunity for that research, both topographical and historical, so requisite to enable one to discuss with any propriety this much-contended question of identity. Neither the arguments deduced by the French traveller *for* the genuineness of the locality fixed upon, nor those of Dr. Robinson *against* it, appear to me at all conclusive. As I surveyed the grey walls so often bespattered with the blood of Christian

and of "Pagan" contending for possession of the revered spot enclosed within, a halo of interest could not but encircle it, if merely viewed as the parent of those sanguinary wars which tracked with gore the onward progress of the Christian cause; the great prize for which European potentates strove century after century with the defiling Mahommedan; host after host rushing on, with hearts frenzied with fiery zeal to wipe away that deep disgrace to which they were first awakened in the tenth century, when, with solemn exhortations and reproach, the second Sylvester raised the bloody signal, calling upon the Christian to wrest the cross from the grasp of the polluting Infidel. The fire thus kindled smouldered on, fed by succeeding Pontiffs, all anxious for the glory of the Church but their ardour restrained by troublous times at home, until, in one thousand and ninety-five, a new spirit appeared upon the stage: the enthusiastic hermit of Amiens roused Urban the Second to the prosecution of the glorious struggle, and then the flame burst forth, refreshed by the religious fuel heaped on it by the six thousand ecclesiastics of the Council of Placentia.

No sooner was the trumpet of fanaticism thus sounded, than, as the eloquent daughter of Alexius exclaimed, "Europe was loosened from its foundations, and hurled against Asia." Eight hundred thousand *croisés*, or cross-bearers, responded to the signal, eager to shed their blood for the rescue of the

Holy Sepulchre, and in the defence of that cross the consecrated emblem of which each wore imprinted on his garment. Assisted by the alarmed but politic Alexius Comnenus, some eighty thousand of that vast multitude reached the confines of Bythinia, and, the boundaries of the Greek empire being passed, the Sultan Soliman beheld, from the heights encircling the Lake Ascanius, the massive walls and towers of Nice trembling beneath the iron-bound battering-rams and catapults of the Christian host, and his subjects falling fast beneath the crushing rocks from their balistas. Antioch, Edessa, with numerous other strongholds, successively fell, like the capital of Nicomedia, before the noble Godfrey of Bouillion and his brother Baldwin; and in one thousand and ninety-nine the illustrious Duke of Lorraine had won the tomb of Christ, and was hailed King of Jerusalem, but refused "to wear a crown of gold in that city where the King of kings had been crowned with thorns." Hardly had fourscore years beheld the prize sustained by Christian fortitude, when factious feelings caused the Holy Empire to be shaken to its base. The enthusiasm of the age soon begat another choice spirit; Bernard of Clairval started forth to preach the cross; emperors, kings, and queens arrayed themselves for Palestine: but how miserable the issue! Louis the Seventh and his queen, with Conrad the Third of Germany, returned to find their kingdoms destitute of troops and treasure, for Asia had swallowed up both,

and the sword of the Mahomedan reeked with Christian blood.

An Infidel, the offspring of a lowly Curd who fed his flocks beyond the Tigris,* now cut his way through the disheartened Christian hosts to the gates of the Holy Sepulchre. The fanatic hero, Saladin, having beheld the noble Frederick Barbarossa and his son with their thousands laid low by the climate and the sword, dashed on to brave the lion-hearted King of England, and the chivalry of France. Ptolemais, Joppa, Cæsarea, with other strongholds of the greatest importance, were garrisoned by Christians; the followers of the Prophet quailed at the name of the Plantagenet. Then would the standard of the *Croisés* have been once more planted upon the walls of Jerusalem, had not the French Philip deserted the English King, and left him to strive unaided against the ever-increasing forces of the gallant Moslem. Thus the third crusade left the Holy Sepulchre beneath the Pagan sway, though Richard gained by treaty a right of approach to the sacred tomb for the Christian pilgrim. The early part of the thirteenth century, however, saw Frederick, the grandson of Barbarossa, pre-eminent on Zion, without expenditure of life or treasure, and the Christian worshipped there once more in safety; but before that same century had run its course, the bosom of the Mediterranean was covered

* Vide Gib. Decl. and Fall, vol. 11, as to Saladin's pedigree and the Crusades.

with barks innumerable laden with weeping followers of Christ; for they were fugitives, or slaves to the Sultan Khalil. Nor did the vain attempt made in the fourteenth century rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Pagan's grasp.

A right of entrance now, indeed, is open to all Christians, but it is a right purchased of the Turk with gold; and although the struggles for possession of the sacred edifice, betwixt the Infidel and the true believer have subsided, yet are the contentions almost as fierce which cherish hatred amongst the schismatics of the Church: for the members of the eastern and of the western Church, mocking true religion, curse one another within its very walls, and fearful quarrels have taken place, and do continually take place, as to the right of performing there their different ceremonies of religion. Sometimes the building owns for its proprietors the Roman Catholic, sometimes the Greek Church. At this period the latter claim it, having been enabled to pay the Moslem a higher price than the funds of the former would admit of.

But to return to our position on the eve of the *nox tenebrosa*. Our attendant worked upon the feelings of the Turkish guardian by performing certain mystical operations at the little grating in the door of the Church, which caused it speedily to open and admit us. Within we found almost as great a crowd of devotees as were in anxious expectation without. Hundreds of pilgrims were

hovering round the sepulchre in the centre of the Church, through whom our Janizary worked his way, opening a path for us by no very gentle means. Taking off our shoes, we entered the little marble edifice enclosing the spot fixed upon by Helena as that where our Lord was laid, and an aged priest receiving us, presented each with some flowers duly blessed, large bouquets of which were lying on the marble altar within.

After viewing, not unmoved, the spot to which tradition concerning so sacred a subject has attached itself, we again withdrew to join a grand procession, headed by priests bearing a large cross with the figure of our Saviour on it. Proceeding from chapel to chapel, marking the different sites of the sufferings and contemptuous usage of the Redeemer before his crucifixion, we heard within each successively a sermon preached, a different language being used at every site, that all those gathered together here from the different nations of the earth might understand: after which, mounting up to Calvary by many steps, great ceremonies were gone through upon the spot reputed to be that where the crucifixion took place. Here two priests, in the characters of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, drew the nails forth from the limbs of the figure on the cross with a pair of forceps; and holding them high in the air one after another, making several circuits with the arm, both that the multitude might behold them,

and that the nails might be seen not to come in contact with their own vile bodies, they laid them on a silver salver: men, women, and children, with bitter sobs and lamentations, crouching meanwhile upon their knees, smote the earth with their faces. The "stone of unction" was next resorted to, and the sacred figure duly anointed amidst the like weeping and bitter wailing. Some Greek women near me did seem deeply affected, tears copiously streaming down their cheeks; but one representing Mary Magdalene (a buxom lass enough) tried in vain to open the flood-gates of grief; sorrow's fountains were to her not so accommodating as to the wrinkled matron. Now was the figure committed to the tomb, and the horrible mummery was wound up with a long sermon in Arabic, which taxed our patience terribly; for we could not endeavour to beat a retreat without a groan of indignation greeting us on all sides, accompanied with a kind of "Oh! you abominable Infidel!" expression flashing from a hundred eyes, so that we were compelled to abide the preacher's time, who at last, having almost choked himself with his eloquence, and us with the close atmosphere he had compelled us to inhale for so great a length of time, afforded us an opportunity for escape: and, there being nothing more in the interior of the building worthy of particular notice, with joy we left it, and returned to our tents.

The evening of the following day we spent in the delightful society of Mr. Young, the Consul, and his

lady. I observed that afternoon immense flocks of the beautiful bird known to our ornithologists as the *Merops apiaster*, or bee-eater, pass over high in air, and making a short whistling note during their flight; but in vain did I endeavour to get within shot by mounting the city walls. For several succeeding days these birds thus continued to pass over in large flights from east to west, from which it might be concluded that they had just migrated into this country to hail the coming spring. I have since met with and shot many of them; for about this season of the year they continually attract the attention of the traveller, as, galloping across the plains of Sharon or the fields of Megiddo, he beholds their bright plumage glistening in the sun, whilst, hovering over the flowers which, in the vernal season, carpet those rich districts, they utter their soft whistling note, then, suddenly rising in the air, dart like a meteor past him, again to skim over the surface of the plain in swift pursuit of their insect food. In our after travels we found them especially numerous about those plains, as also on that of Esdraelon: not that they confine themselves to the low country, for amongst the beautiful groves which adorn Mount Tabor from its summit to its base, they find an undisturbed retreat, as also amidst the forests of prickly oak which cover the range of Naphtali and the Great Hermon; and how do they contribute to the beauty of those delicious gardens watered by the fountains of

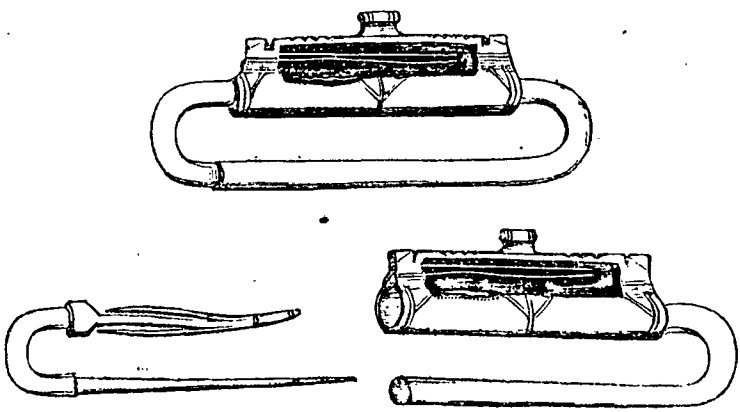
Damascus! The natives tell you these birds pursue the devastating swarms of locusts, but, merely slaying them, leave their carcases untouched, an instance of moderation that may be doubted. Neither does the Syrian show any gratitude for their services as locust-killers; for I one day met a fellow in the neighbourhood of Carmel holding by the legs a dozen or more of these elegant creatures, which he had just trapped by placing limed twigs about a bed of plants which probably they were attracted to by insects. The Bee-eater, the Roller, and the Golden Oriel, are the pride of Syria's plains and groves: the latter is not, however, very numerous; indeed, I only observed it about the fields of Megiddo and the woods of Banias, (the Cæsarea Philippi of the ancients,) at the foot of Hermon; neither could I, from its extreme shyness, ever obtain a specimen, though I have spent many an hour in pursuit of them.

But to return from this ornithological digression. My friend Mr. Hill and I, shortly after the *nox tenebrosa*, being in the neighbourhood of the sacred building where the ceremonies of that eve took place, had a trivial adventure, worthy, perhaps, of a passing notice.

Wandering through the city towards sunset one fine evening, anathematizing her ill-paved gloomy streets, and jostling crowds of Moslems, we turned down the narrow way that leads to the Holy Sepulchre, and, traversing the court in front, lounged onward to the entrance of a large and

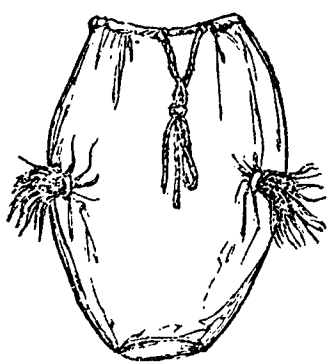
gloomy arched arcade, one of the bazaars of the city, where, upon the platform in the front of his shop or stall, the solemn but avaricious Turk sits during the day, smoking and chaffering with his customers, but at this hour, the evening drawing on, had left his stall, to seek the pleasures of his *chibook* and his harem. Having proceeded about half-way through this dismal place, one of us noticed that the great folding-doors at the opposite extremity of the passage were shut, so that we were caught in a *cul de sac*. Therefore, turning round, we beat a retreat by the way we came, but too late, for a gaunt and grisly Nubian, stalking forth from some dark retreat, hastily drew together the ponderous door, threw a huge bar across, and, with an air of triumphant satisfaction, was marching off. However, we detained him, endeavouring to impress upon his mind at the same time, by the most eloquent signs that we were capable of making, that we had not the remotest desire to spend the night in such a cold and gloomy chamber. It was, however, of no avail; he savagely refused to let us out, which provoked us to batter the fastening with a stone, which he interfering to prevent, Mr. Hill seized him by the girdle, whilst I continued the assault upon the massive lock: but suddenly observing our sooty adversary dash his hand into the bosom of his loose garment, it struck me that he, as customary in that country, was possessed of a sabre-knife, and fully expecting to see the flash of the ugly blade, hastily crying

out, "He'll stab you!" in order to avert the blow, I seized the fellow by his naked sinewy throat, and, our united efforts throwing him on his back, I fell on him, and during the struggle with him on the ground, feeling something attached to his girdle, tore it away. Then, with a cry of "All right!" leaving the prostrate enemy, I dived my hand into the filthy leather bag, as the prize proved, and sought what I felt it contained, viz., some instrument appertaining to the doors, with which I trusted we might speedily work our release, as our prisoner was yelling and shouting for assistance in a most vociferous manner, whilst my friend kept him in durance vile by main force. Instead, however, of drawing forth a key formed by any Christian mechanic, I found a most eccentric work of Moslem art, which made our case appear hopeless.



The Nubian had now fled, after a series of most violent struggles, leaving in the hands of Mr. Hill his great loose outer garment, or "*abbayeh*." His

clamours and cries for help echoed through the dark vaulted passage, and a "*fulmen perturbationum*" invaded our minds; imagination heard the approaching Pagans rushing on, and already did we consider ourselves stoned, and cut to pieces with their awful hippopotamus-hide whips. "We must hide ourselves!" said one: "It is useless, they are sure to find us!" said the other. "Then here's our last chance!" we both exclaimed, as, hearing the distant clamour of the approaching enemy, we tugged and pulled at the lower part of one of the huge leaves of the dilapidated doors, and my friend, throwing off his *Bernoose*, then squeezed through beneath with the greatest exertion. Aided by him outside, I also succeeded in following, after quaking greatly lest I should have become an object of contention with my head on one side of the door and my legs on the other. Leaving the field of battle strewed with outer garments, we ran with right good-will, as fast as we dared so as not to excite suspicion, and fully expecting the cry of indignant Moslems to be heard in full chase, sought the shelter of the Latin Convent, where, putting my hand into my pocket, I drew forth the goat-skin bag, adorned with tassels, and well bedaubed with dirt and grease, from



the fuliginous grasp of the African. Examining the trophy, we could not by any means discover its use, and returning it into its bag, we carried it up to Mr. Young, the Consul, to ask the best mode of proceeding under the circumstances. This gentleman advised us to keep in close quarters for a day or two; not to pay another visit to that part of the town; and to keep the padlock, or whatever it might be, until inquiry was made for it. The first portion of this advice we did not very strictly follow, for curiosity tempted us the next morning to go down differently dressed, and not without our pistols (as we foolishly were the night before), to see how the coast lay, and whether our friend, the guardian of the bazaar, was still on duty; but we found there nothing to enlighten us, the great portals were open, the Moslem shopkeepers smoking and chaffering, and people of all grades hastening backwards and forwards as usual through the arched bazaar. We therefore arrived at the conclusion that my friend's bernoose, which he had thrown off to enable him to squeeze through the narrow aperture of escape, having been found on the field of action, and deemed by the enemy no bad exchange for the greasy bag and its contents that we had carried off, we should hear no more about it; and this supposition proved correct. Doubtless had we not released ourselves as we did from the bazaar, before the arrival of the assistant guardians of the place, we should have

suffered severely for our attack upon the door-keeper. We at the time were invaded with the idea that we had by some means entered a passage leading to the great enclosure of the Mosque of Omar, the "Holy of Holies" of the Mahometan, the pollution of which by a Christian foot calls certain vengeance from the followers of the false Prophet. This proved not to be the case; but even where we were we should, if overpowered, have felt the venom of the intolerant Moslem towards the Djaour: for though their fanaticism and their abomination for the Christian is at present somewhat concealed, because they dare not openly shew it, as but a few years back they would have done, and still indeed do in less frequented parts, yet such an opportunity of maltreating a Christian, without fear of discovery, on account of the lateness of the hour and the gloom of the place, would doubtless have been taken advantage of. It is perfectly necessary, indeed, that the stranger should, in any city of the East into which the fortune of travel may cast him, bear in mind that he is an object of detestation in the heart of the Moslem, and that although from interested motives, religious fanaticism is not so strongly displayed at the present day, yet the slightest interference with national prejudices will prove to him, perhaps in no very pleasant manner, that the fire of hatred is only smothered, not extinguished.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EXCURSION TO THE DEAD SEA.

Pilgrims.—Greek dance.—Lose our friends.—Fierce muleteer.—Road to Bethlehem.—Rachael's tomb.—Vale of Rephaim.—"City of David."—Valley of Eshcol.—Hebron.—Quartered at a Rabbi's house.—Visitors.—Sepulchre of the Patriarchs.—Abraham's oak.—Our friends restored to us.—Their adventures.—"The Pool in Hebron."—An old acquaintance.—Curious adventure.

On the 17th of April we had arranged to join an expedition set on foot by the Rev. Geo. Williams, (late Chaplain to the Bishop of Jerusalem,) in order to make an excursion by the way of Bethlehem and Hebron to the Dead Sea. The hour fixed on for starting upon this journey being early, arrangements were accordingly made by us with muleteers over night, that we might have the necessary number of horses and mules at our tents betimes in the morning: neither did they fail us on this point, for bringing their ragged-looking beasts of burthen, they tethered them around our encampment that very evening, so that we flattered ourselves, we should have little to delay us the following morning; and when the morning came, there were the steeds sure enough, but neither

were their owners forthcoming, nor the necessary trappings, until long after the hour we had appointed to meet our party. At last, however, the muleteers did make their appearance, lounging into the enclosure with an air of thorough Oriental apathy, not to be disturbed at all by our impatience, nor by the bustle and curses of the servants.

Mounted eventually, but terribly in the rear, Mr. Hill, Mr. Woodhead, and myself, following a heavy ferocious-looking old Syrian, who seemed to consider himself the leading man of our escort, unthinkingly pursued our course through the whole length of the city from west to east, running momentary risk of breaking our necks from the extreme slipperiness and irregularity of the pavement. Arrived at St. Stephen's gate, a curious scene presented itself to our eyes, for this was the day of the grand washing expedition to the Jordan, duly performed by the hosts of pilgrims at this season in Jerusalem, and the way on either side from St. Stephen's Gate down to the bottom of the Valley of Jehoshaphat was crowded with thousands of devotees of all nations, the majority of them women and children, the former mostly veiled, and sitting about in groups. Amongst the latter, gamboling around, were some of the sweetest faces I ever beheld. The loveliness of Greek children (of which nation these chiefly were) is often, indeed, surpassingly great, the youth of both sexes having generally so soft a style of countenance, so

beautiful a complexion of the purest red and white, together with full large eyes of deep expression, that the Frank can but tarry a moment to gaze upon them. A party of Albanians, dressed in their most gay and festive attire, were dancing a species of war dance in the middle of the road, the evolutions of which chiefly consisted in twirling round and snapping the fingers, then in a furious and excited manner rushing here and there brandishing their sabres over their heads and cutting right and left, as if in deadly combat, whilst others of the party, holding their guns in one hand over their heads or behind their backs, would fire them off, then hurling them in the air, catch them as they fell, and so continue firing with their guns and pistols wildly in all directions, which led us, (well knowing the mad character of these sons of Greece, and that often, in their *feux de joie*, they do not load with powder alone, but send their messengers of death helter skelter amongst the admiring crowd,) to leave them to their antics, and proceed to cross the valley below.

It now suddenly struck us that we could not be following the course to Bethlehem; so, shouting to our guide, we found to our amazement that he was taking us to Jericho, deeming that of course we intended to embrace the waters of the Jordan like other devout pilgrims. Somewhat annoyed, but yet amused at our excessive carelessness, we once more, hastily turning our horses' heads, re-crossed the

vale, repassed the pilgrim host, who were waiting for the Pasha and his troops to come forth from the city to escort them to the Jordan, and, following the road along the base of the eastern wall of the city, pursued it until, rounding Zion and crossing the southern extremity of the Valley of Gihon, we came upon the Bethlehem road, where, casting a glance around, and finding our party gone, we pursued our course, having with us, besides our own, the baggage mules of some of our lost friends.

Our head muleteer so far had shewn a disposition to be savage and sulky enough, but now, enraged at taking the wrong road, he gave vent to his fury by seizing one of our servants by the leg and almost unhorsing him, at the same time offering us a specimen of most impassioned Arabic; the only reply we vouchsafed to which was, ordering the man he had thus assaulted to knock him down with the butt-end of his gun, if he showed the slightest inclination to renew the attempt. This command he translated to the fellow, who fiercely cursing us, and thanking Allah that he was a true believer, not a dog of a Christian, threatened to return to the city, which we informed him he might do, but that ourselves and his mules were going to Bethlehem; whereupon, seeing us determined, he swallowed the bitter pill of wrath, and was quieter for a time.

Traversing the plain of Rephaim, a vast and

stony track, with hardly a bush to cheer the eye, we presently passed close by the walls of Mâr Elŷas, an ancient Greek convent, within the walls of which the wanderer may see upon a stone the impress of the body of the prophet whose name is attached to the sacred edifice. Soon afterwards, upon our right, we beheld a small domed building of poor and ruinous exterior, yet held by the children of Israel in the greatest veneration, for "Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." And *this* is the humble memorial raised to mark the site of that pillar according to the Jewish belief; and around it may be often seen by the passing traveller the outcast descendants of the most beloved wife of Jacob echoing that voice which was heard in Rama, "Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning —Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

The country now became more picturesque, deep vales and slopes of hills, clothed with olives, varying the scenery; and then before us rose the "City of David," upon an elevated ridge, commanding a deep and fruitful valley, where the fig and the vine luxuriate. Such is the Vale of Rephaim, where the "troop of the Philistines pitched," (2 Sam. xxiii. 13,) defying David and his mighty men; and nigh at hand are the ruins of the castle

within which lay the sweet Psalmist of Israel when he cried, "Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" for "David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem."

Crossing this vale at its south-western extremity, and ascending the opposite slope, we found ourselves within the village of Bethlehem. A very mean village it is internally, and as to its inhabitants, they bear their character in their countenances: a wild unmanageable race now, as of old, they are continually rebelling, it is said, against their Turkish masters; neither did they crouch to the Egyptian rule, but, in the insurrection against that government in 1834, dared and suffered the rod of Ibrahim Pasha.

The population is a very mixed one; for though Christians preponderate, yet are there to be found within its ragged mass of crumbling buildings, robbers of the desert, and robbers of the walls, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, and Jews—all, unless fame lies, a disgrace to their profession, excepting the two first.

Such are the inhabitants of the "favoured city of David," the cradle of "glory, peace, and goodwill," above whose valley of pomegranates and figs, some eighteen hundred years ago, the music of the heavenly chorus floated on the breeze. One memorial alone remains to mark the holy site the village stands upon: that me-

morial is the bequest of the pious Empress Helena —a convent worthy of its founder, crowning the eastern summit of the hill, and presenting on all sides a goodly aspect; covering, moreover, that spot which tradition best fixes on as the very place of the nativity of the "Consolation of Israel." Within it lamps of never-failing fire are ever bright, and clouds of sweet incense shroud the rugged ceiling of the vault, cut out in the natural rock, where the monks inform you, and perhaps not falsely, that the infant Redeemer and his virgin Mother found shelter. But adieu, for the present, to this most holy city, the birth-place of David and of David's Lord!

Anxiously did we hurry on with the hope of overtaking our party. It was exactly a quarter before the hour of noon when we entered Bethlehem, having been rather more than two hours upon the road since leaving the spot below the Jaffa gate, where we first arrived upon the direct way, after our error of the morning. The distance being only six miles from Jerusalem, we should not have been so long traversing it had not accidents happened to our baggage on the way, one of our mules once or twice fancying to lie down and refusing to rise again without strenuous exertion and showers of blows from the muleteers. Rugged is the route, lying over a series of rocky hills, betwixt Bethlehem and Hebron; yet quantities of gay flowers and dwarf shrubs, with intervening beds of a species of rosemary in full bloom, rendered the journey fair

pleasanter than that over the plain of Rephaim. Our horses' feet being, according to the custom of the country, covered with a plate of iron, they made at times some fearful slips upon the smooth rocks; yet towards evening we arrived in safety within the confines of the valley of Eshcol, where vineyards with scattered figs and pomegranates brought to our minds the spies sent out by Moses to spy the land of Canaan, whether "it were good or bad," and how they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and returned again to Kadesh, laden with the gigantic cluster of grapes, pomegranates, and figs mentioned in the narrative.

The vineyards here were all walled with loose rocks piled one upon the other; whilst built in the wall of every vine enclosure there were at intervals square-topped houses, or towers, for the guardians to dwell in (Mark xii. 1), and where, probably, they tread the grape in the vintage season.

It was six o'clock before we passed within the gates of that city, built seven years before the ancient seat of the Pharaohs in Egypt,* "Kirjath-arba," where dwelt the giant sons of Anak. We knew not anything of the fate of our party, neither could we obtain the slightest intelligence concerning them from any of the numerous pilgrims whom we had met with in the course of our journey. Enquiring for a spot where to pitch our tents, no

* "Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt."—Numb. xiii. "Abraham dwelt in Hebron, which is a city seven years more ancient than Tanis in Egypt."—*Josephus' Antiq.* 1. 8.

one seemed able or willing to tell us of any convenient one; neither would our muleteers assist us in the least, merely abusing us for bringing them to Hebron instead of letting them take us to Jericho, as they had intended. We, therefore, hastily despatched a messenger to the governor of the city, begging him to be courteous enough to direct us to some house within her walls where we might obtain shelter for the night; and shortly afterwards we found ourselves located in a large clean apartment with a raised platform at one end, surrounded with a divan, within the Jews' quarter, which we deemed far preferable to encamping within the Turkish cemetery to breathe an atmosphere tainted with dead Moslems, as a son of Anak outside of the gate recommended us to do, at the same time zealously devoting our beards to destruction.

We were tired, having been many hours in the saddle without a moment's rest, and with incomparable delight did we stretch ourselves upon the cushions of the divan, then, ordering something immediately to be compounded to satisfy our hunger, took our chibooks to quell its raging until the repast was prepared. Scarcely, however, had we become comfortably arranged, and finished our mutual congratulations at having found so secluded an apartment, building castles in the air as to stopping there some days, and so on, if our friends did not appear, when in lounged a visitor armed with a long chibook, who, sitting down upon the floor in the

oriental style, composedly examined us a moment, put his pipe into his mouth, and industriously puffed forth volumes of tobacco. Others soon arrived, and with the greatest *sang froid*, appeared to be canvassing the merits of our personal appearance. Then came women and children, who walked in and then walked out again, as if the room were a menagerie and we were the wild beasts. But presently a stir was evident, and there appeared a venerable man of dignified bearing and most patriarchal aspect; in fact, as noble a looking Rabbi as I have ever met with, which is saying much, for the superior Jews are often of very noble appearance. This was the *Padrone* himself, the lord of the house, and the head of the synagogue. Rising immediately, we saluted him with respect, and he received us with a well-bred air of courtesy and kindness. In the course of a short conversation with him, we found that his house was the general resting-place of the few Frank travellers who visit the City of Hebron. A most beautiful little girl came in whilst we were talking, who proved to be the grandchild of our venerable friend: my telescope afforded her much amusement, and we were great allies, until directing her to look through the glass at the lamp upon a stool in the centre of the room, she seemed to deem it treachery, and winking her eyes from the blaze of light, ran off. Conversation now flagged a little, for we had nearly expended our Italian, which was the tongue

communed in, when happily appeared a relief in the shape of a chicken pilau and a flagon of Cyprian wine, which our host refusing to partake of, we quickly took our stations, *a là Turque*, upon the floor, and most successfully devoted our undivided attention to that which was before us. A feast of reason and a flow of soul naturally ensued, as quaffing a well-filled grace-cup of Greek wine, we drank the health of absent friends, especially of our lost companions: and then, with mirthful hearts and minds refreshed by our moderate carouse, each took his place for the night, and stretched upon the cushions of the divan, slept as travellers alone do sleep, to rise by daylight on the following morning prepared for another twelve hours' exercise of mind and body.

The morning repast finished, and a guide procured, we first sought that celebrated edifice alleged to cover the sepulchre of the patriarchs, "the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre," which Ephron the Hittite "made sure unto Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city." (Gen. xxiii.) The Moslems guard this tomb with the greatest jealousy, and woe to that Christian who sets his foot within its portal. Three Europeans alone have ever ventured it, and they in the character of Moslems; Burckhardt, Ali Bey, and Giovanni Finati. It is a massive building, standing upon high ground, on the eastern aspect of the city. Sixteen pilasters on each side and

eight at either end, afford but a slight relief to its heavy appearance. Minarets of modern structure adorn each corner; the upper portion of the walls is composed of paltry Moslem masonry, whilst the lower portion, formed of huge bevelled stones, speak of remote antiquity. Some of these stones, measured by Irby and Mangles, were found to be above twenty-five feet in length, but the average size is not so great. Ali Bey, who entered this structure in 1807, tells us that the sepulchres of the patriarchs within are covered with rich carpets of green silk, magnificently embroidered with gold, those of their wives being red, and embroidered in the same manner; and that the Sultans of Constantinople furnish these carpets, which are renewed from time to time. "I counted," says he, "nine, one over the other, upon the sepulchre of Abraham. The rooms also which contain the tombs are covered with rich carpets. The entrance to them is guarded by iron gates and wooden doors plated with silver, with bolts and padlocks of the same metal." Drawing near the steps leading to the portal of the building, I mounted one or two, but a shout of execration from a Turk within warned me not to proceed. The view from hence of Hebron is good; its suburbs, intermingled with fruitful vineyards and gardens, have a pleasant appearance; steep hills overshadow the city, the valley in which it is situated running nearly north-west and south-east.

Descending again into the town, we mounted

Drawn from Nature by Dawson Borrer. L.Picken lith.

ABRAHAM'S OAK

our horses towards the afternoon to pay a visit to a noble tree, beneath the shade of which, tradition says, Abraham ministered to the angels of the Lord, who appeared to him "as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day" in the plains of Mamre. "And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under *the tree*, and they did eat." It is a venerable tree indeed! its wide-spreading branches covering an enormous space of rich refreshing turf. Josephus, speaking of the Patriarch, says, "Now Abraham dwelt near the oak called Ogyges; the place belongs to Canaan, not far from the city of Hebron," &c.; and again, "Abram, as he sat by the oak at Mamre," &c.; also, after relating the descent of Simon of Gerasa upon Hebron, and speaking of the great antiquity of the city, he relates,—"There is also there shewn, at the distance of six furlongs from the city, a very large turpentine tree, and the report goes that this tree has continued ever since the creation of the world."* It is not impossible that this may be that same tree so mentioned by that ancient Jewish historian, though it can hardly be called a turpentine (or balsam) tree, being a prickly oak; neither are there, as far as we observed, at the present day any other sort of trees around Hebron that would produce turpentine, or balsam. This species of oak being very slow in growing, the bulk

* Antiq. 1. 10. Ib. 1. 11. De Bell. 4. 9.

of this individual tree announces its extreme age, the trunk being above twenty feet in girth.* From the specimens I brought away, it proves to be of that species of oak known as the *Quercus Gramuntia*, or "Holly-leaved Grammont oak," the acorns of which are edible; and the ancients believed that by them the tunny fish, in their passage from the ocean to the Mediterranean, were fattened, in those days when the shores of Andalusia were clothed with dark forests of this noble tree.†

Turning our horses loose to graze, we spent some time lounging on the turf, meditating on the city of the Anakims, and grateful that no giant sons of Anak were there to make us feel as grasshoppers in their sight. This is a favourite haunt of the Hebronites, where, sheltered from the mid-day heat, the men sit and smoke, whilst the women and children converse and sport beneath the holy tree: not that always it has been the witness of

* Dr. Robinson observes of this tree, "The branches extend from the trunk in one direction forty-nine feet, their whole diameter in the same direction being eighty-nine feet, and in the other, at right angles, eighty-three and a-half feet."

† Mr. Loudon, speaking of this species of oak, observes, from Captain S. E. Cooke, that the swine producing the celebrated salt meats of Malaga were fattened on its acorns; and that "these are the bellotas which Tereza, the wife of Sancho Panza, gathered in La Mancha, and sent to the Duchess, wishing, instead of being only the best of their kind, they were the size of ostrich eggs." Captain Cook says he has often seen them offered as *bon-bons*;—the widest forests of it now are in Estremadura, &c.—*Arboretum Britannicum.*

such peaceful scenes; for many a bloody conflict has taken place within its immediate vicinity, betwixt that period when the tramp of Christian and of Pagan hosts, fiercely contending for the glory of the Cross, caused the land to tremble from the Dan to the Beersheba of the Saracenic sway, from the shores of the Propontis to the confines of the Southern Desert, and that period, in the present century, when the Egyptian pressed forward with his rod of iron, and smote the city of the patriarchs and her rebellious inhabitants, leaving her but a heap of reeking blood-stained ruins: for Ibrahim Pasha met the Hebronites during the rebellion of 1834, and gaining a pitched battle nigh the Pools of Solomon, thus wreaked a sanguinary vengeance on them and their city. Neither, it appears, can the inhabitants of these districts, when at peace without, contain their fierce spirits in quietude at home; for they are continually contending with their immediate neighbours, loving the sword far better than the ploughshare. Even the worker in the vineyard has his long gun upon his back, his belt well stocked with murderous knives, and his knotted club of wood or iron at hand, fully prepared to brain his enemy, or rob the unprotected traveller. Let not the Frank, wandering amidst the wilds of Palestine, tarry thoughtlessly behind his fellow-travellers unless well armed; neither let him attach himself to those who will, without regard, leave him in the

lurch when any little matter delays him on the route; for yon peasant, with his antiquated matchlock on his back, though apparently intent upon pruning his vines, has his eye upon you, and will gladly prune your pockets with the same instrument, and sheath it in your breast if vain opposition is offered. The Fellahs of the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and, indeed, of all the surrounding districts, are, as a race, desperate villains; so much so that our Consul at the first-named city warned me not to be outside the walls without my pistols: and during our stay there, a young Englishman (afterwards a fellow-traveller through the northern parts of Syria), whilst quietly sketching one day, near the valley of Jehoshaphat, was attacked and robbed of all the money he had about him by two of these desperadoes, one of their uncouth knives being held at his throat during the process.*

But to return from this digression to the oak upon the plain of Mamre. After taking a slight sketch of this revered tree, and having observed, to our sorrow, that time was working its destruction, (for a hole in the trunk betrayed its hollowness,) we caught our steeds, and, vaulting into the saddle, spurred off across a piece of tilled land,

* Some idea of the character of the people may be drawn from the style of answer a Syrian gives if you ask him the population of a place, for the answer is, "500 men (or whatever the amount may be), *with guns.*"

with our faces turned towards the town again. Hardly, however, had we gone a hundred yards from the spot, when a shout attracted our attention, and, looking back, we beheld a group of horsemen, evidently Franks, drawing near the ancient oak from the opposite direction, and, in another moment, hailed our lost friends, who, upon inquiry, proved not to have spent the past night, as we had done, upon luxurious divans, neither had they caroused o'er chicken pilau their Cyprian wine. Far from it! their couch had been the hard stony bed of the brook in the valley of Elah, where David slew Goliath of Gath, and their only sustenance the evening and the morning dew. It appeared that, after waiting some time for us at the gate of Jerusalem, where we should have met, they proceeded, not as we had by some mistake been led to suppose they intended, towards Hebron, but upon the road to *Beit-Jibrîn*, to the north-west of Hebron; and towards night, having wandered from their track, and entered a village to procure shelter or assistance, they obtained abuse and insult, couched in such terms that, turning their horses' heads, they galloped out again far faster than they had entered, and, turning out of the track to elude pursuit, reached the above valley. There, in momentary fear of being attacked by the natives, they dared not pitch their tents, but, lying down in the bed of the brook, took turns in sleeping and in watching till the daylight

broke again; when, stiff and half frozen, they stealthily moved off, and after divers adventures, (of which I now forget the particulars, they not having been impressed upon my memory by partaking of them,) they arrived where we now met. If they had been attacked, as they had every reason to expect might be the case, the Philistines would have suffered but little loss for their temerity it was supposed; for, though our friends had one or two guns and several pistols, they were by some means without ammunition, having only one loaded pistol, and the tent-poles for spears, to greet the enemy with. They hid, therefore, their money beneath the stones of the brook, lest being vanquished and robbed the spoil should be great; whereas, thus concealed, it might have been afterwards regained by them.

Our party was now increased at the rabbi's house to seven, besides servants. This being too great a number for comfort in so small a space, some had their tents pitched outside of the town, and there passed the night, whilst others shared the divan, and found it quite as comfortable and fit to promote sleep as the hard bed of the brook of Elah.

We on our parts regretted very much that we had thus been separated, as they had visited some interesting sites; and, moreover, we rather envied them their adventure, though, as we had ammunition, double guns, pistols, and other warlike

weapons of defence and offence, such an addition to the party would doubtless have contributed amazingly to keep the peace; for the Arabs have a particular aversion to Frank firearms, particularly those which are double-barrelled, considering such as begetting fire and death unlimited. Their wretched matchlocks, indeed, opposed to European guns, have but a very sorry chance, since one of the latter might be fired several times before theirs could be brought into action—a compulsory tardiness of operation to which I am personally indebted: for one day in the desert, having most grievously enraged a Bedouin, he turned upon me with gnashing teeth, and had his gun not been a matchlock my friends might at this time perhaps be girt in sackcloth; but the clumsiness of his piece and want of fire gave him time to change his deadly intentions, and me to bring forth a weapon of defence; so that the same hour found us trotting along upon the same camel, with the smoke of the pipe of peace, and not of gunpowder, in our nostrils.

But to return to Hebron, or El-Khulîl, as the natives name it: the evening that our party thus again became united some of us went to a manufactory of glass within the city, where we found Syrians almost in a state of nudity, sitting round a furnace blowing lamps and bottles. The latter were the object of our visit; for we wished for some, that when arrived at the shores of the Asphaltic Lake we might bear away portions of its

mysterious waters to satisfy the curiosity of friends at home. It surprised us to find such a manufactory, at so remote and uncivilized a place as Hebron; but it appears that it is by no means a modern introduction, as Dr. Robinson mentions a like manufactory spoken of as flourishing there, in "Gumpenberg's Journal," A.D. 1449, and by Felix Fabri, A. D. 1483. One of the chief articles of sale are rings of coloured glass, and bracelets of the same, with which the arms and fingers of fair Syrians are generally loaded. The lamps fabricated here are exported to Egypt and other countries in considerable quantities, for the adorning of mosques, &c.

The following morning we rose at a very early hour to visit "David's Pools," two tanks of great dimensions, and of undoubted antiquity, constructed with masonry of well-chiselled stones. Women were shuffling up and down the steps leading to the surface of the water, with water skins or earthen vases upon their heads. I say they were *shuffling* up and down these stairs, where the light-footed European damsel would have tripped with that elastic step, which the Houris of the East can never emulate until they throw aside their large loose slippers, which not only jealously conceal the slightest vestige of a foot, but entirely mar all elegance of gait. Hence the Oriental beauty, when wrapped up in the usual winding-sheet walking attire, and the long white face-veil, passes you, rolling and scuffling, rather like an unman-

nerly ghost than "the patent work of Heaven's invention,"—so fearfully is all grace disguised. Two large black eyes, disfigured with khol, flash perhaps above the *borcho*, or face-veil; but imagination alone can contemplate the rest. Surely the wives and the daughters of the "true believer" might follow the precepts of their Prophet, and "cast their outer garments over them, so that they discover not their ornaments when walking abroad," and yet not so totally smother all attractiveness.

Having examined the upper and the lower pool, and read how "the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baaneh, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, and smote him under the fifth rib;" and how David burst forth in generous indignation at so cowardly and base a murder, even though Ishbosheth was "the son of Saul, his enemy, who sought his life;" and how "he commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron;" we turned towards our rabbi's house again, by the way of the bazaars, the emptiness of which spoke not very highly for the trade of the city. Whilst standing at one of the stalls buying some bullets, we turning round, beheld, "*cum horrore*," the ferocious aspect of one who had sworn to wreak a bloody vengeance on our heads,—the sheikh of Dhoherîyeh, the village which was, as I have related, the scene of

contention the day before our arrival at Jerusalem. Evidently recognising us, and condemning us and our most venerable ancestors to be burnt, he dashed off with a foreboding growl. No terrestrial apparition could have been less welcome to us; but, putting our bullets into our pockets, with a feeling of satisfaction that we had something to bestow upon him in case of a second visit, we marched off to the Jews' quarter to breakfast.

Hardly was our repast concluded, when the door of our apartment hastily burst open, and in rushed, streaming with blood, a servant of one of the party, who, after much howling, pointed to his face with deep sighs and groans, then howled and roared again at the sight of his own blood. Somewhat subduing his violent passion he related, that passing from the main street into the passage leading to our quarters, he found there a crowd, from which a Syrian darting forth accused him of being one of the party engaged in the Dhoherîyehan affair, demanding, at the same time, a further payment for the camels they had supplied to that party (an extortion which, as I have before stated, our Consul advised us not to give way to). Not having been one of the party, and being, therefore, perfectly ignorant of the circumstances, the man struggled to escape from the fellow's grasp, who then made a stab at him with his sabre knife, which he, warding it from his breast, received on his cheek, and breaking away from his assailant fled

to our room. Finding, upon examination, that though cut through the cheek, his wound was nothing of account, we left him to his bitter lamentations, and endeavoured to quiet our followers, some of whom, mad with rage, were running here and there with their pistols, vowing great deeds of slaughter and a bloody requital. One in particular rushed out in the most valiant manner; but the fire of his courage by some means became extinguished before he had gone many yards, and, returning, he with a pale face reported that the sheikh of Dhoherîyeh, with fifty men of might, was waiting for us in the town. Taking our arms we sallied forth. Jews and Jewesses crowded the narrow streets of the quarter, many of the latter very fair and of sweet expression, but their faces now betokening deep anxiety. Arrived in the main street, we found not any enraged Dhoherîyehens to receive us; and if the sheikh had been there with his fifty fighting men, he and his fifty were now gone.

Demanding the way to the Governor's house, onward we marched in good order through the town, which now was in a state of great excitement and commotion—fierce expressions and ejaculations ever and anon reaching our ears from the surrounding multitude. That of "*Down with the Djaours; there is no Ibrahim Pasha over us now!*" (or words to that effect) being the most prevalent. The latter remark evidently

referring to the summary vengeance the Egyptian ruler was wont to inflict in case of travellers being molested by those beneath his sway. Arrived at the palace, a wondrous mean one, and passing a dirty court, we were ushered into a very small room, where we found his honour, a man of noble stature and superior countenance. Rising, he invited us to the divan, and, stepping up, we sat cross-legged upon the carpet, and cried for justice—demanding the body of the criminal alive or dead. Sherbet was now brought in to sooth our feelings and allay our wrath; and was handed round in neatly cut glass bowls. We each took some, but it proved of very inferior composition, and had not at all the desired effect: so the Governor rose and departed, under the plea of seeking the offender, finding neither his sherbet nor his arguments sufficiently persuasive to quiet us.

The proceedings on our side were carried on by the Rev. Mr. Williams and Mr. Witts, the only two of the party who could speak a word of Arabic, excepting a little Syrian boy these gentlemen had with them, who proved an excellent interpreter, though dealing much in hyperbole, clothing both questions and answers in such flowery and figurative garments, and accompanying his Oriental eloquence with such impassioned action, that in spite of our situation we were highly amused. The rest of us were mere spectators, which I for my part enjoyed amazingly, sipping my sherbet

undisturbed, except when now and then called upon to put on an aspect of awful determination. After sherbet came coffee; and there we sat in deep consultation within this privy chamber of the Royal Palace for a considerable time, until at last it flashed upon our minds, that perhaps the Governor had played us a trick, and had vacated the seat of judgment until our departure. We therefore sent messengers to find him, and at last received an express that his Highness could not succeed in discovering our intended victim, and would be very much obliged to us to move off. We considered this as a subterfuge and insult, and therefore determined to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in his privy chamber until satisfaction was rendered us.

The hours were rapidly flying on; a mysterious silence pervaded the crowd without, and no Governor appeared. Anxious to proceed upon our journey, our patience began to flag, and our suspicions to increase that something unpleasant was hatching for us; when suddenly a sound was heard approaching—a great bustling in the outer court. Grasping our arms, we started on our feet, deeming the climax at hand, when, to our utter amazement, thirteen aged Israelites, with long white beards and flowing robes, Chief Rabbis of the Synagogue of Hebron, shuffled into the room, and, scrambling up to the divan, seized and hugged us in their arms, kissed our hands, our feet, and the

lowest hem of our garments, put their fingers to their eyes, (by which we were to infer that we were as dear to them as the apple of the eye,) and bowed to the ground * with a motion as of throwing dust upon their heads. Then, rending their garments, they took up a lamentation and bitter wailing, accompanied with most urgent prayers, beseeching us to relent from our purpose, and leave the city, out of compassion to them; for otherwise, when we were gone, the Moslems would wreak their rage on them because we were lodging in their quarter.

The sudden and affectionate descent of these venerable old gentlemen upon us for a time stupified us. For my own part, I was so out of breath with struggling in the embraces of an ancient patriarch, who had run me up into a corner, that, when escaped from the tempest of his affection, well nigh smothered and gasping thanksgivings for ultimate deliverance, I sat me down again upon the carpet, and seizing a cup half full of sherbet quaffed deeply, leaving the rest of the party to make the best of it they could. Quiet somewhat succeeding this extraordinary scene, we assured our venerable assailants that our regret would be very great if we should risk bringing evil on their heads, but, the present case being one which concerned not only ourselves but all future travellers in those regions,

* See the antiquity of this mode of expressing grief—Josh. vii. 6; Job ii. 12; Ezek. xxvii. 30; Lam. ii. 10; Acts xxii. 23; Rev. xviii. 19.

it was but a necessary act of justice and precaution to protect our servants; we could not, therefore, forego our intention of punishing the criminal if possible. They said no more, but groaning in the bitterness of their hearts, rose and went their ways.

Two most striking personages were now ushered in, men of majestic aspect, whose long white beards, and tottering gait, betokened a venerable age, as did their costly robes the high authority they held within the city. One was perfectly blind, and felt his way with a staff that he carried in his hand. Rising, wonderfully impressed with the dignity of their appearance, we moved forward, and, assisting them to mount the platform of the divan, seated ourselves beside them upon the cushions. They then, announcing themselves as the Mufti and Cadi of the great city of El-Khulîl, begged us not to persist in our dangerous demand, but to proceed upon our way in peace. "The man," said they, "who stabbed your servant, is a madman, he knew not what he did. Oh, by the love of Abraham, depart in peace! Be merciful! be merciful! in remembrance of that patriarch and prophet, whom we alike revere!" 'Twas of no avail, neither Abraham nor eloquence would move us. Silence and looks of despair ensued. A crowd approached; the tall figure of the Governor was there, and with him his "*posse comitatus*," encircling, to our astonishment, the offender. Mr. Williams had seen the present Governor of Hebron at Jerusalem, and

had received and broken bread with him in that city; and, the culprit proving to be the Governor's *own brother!* he, addressing Mr. Williams, adjured him, "by the sacred rights of hospitality," "by the bread they had broken together," to pursue the case no farther. A ray of hope lighted up for a moment the face of the culprit, which before was distorted with such a remarkable expression of fear as I never before beheld depicted upon the face of man. Stepping forward he *kissed the blood upon the cheek of his wounded victim.* A scene ensued. A generous-hearted Moslem rushing forward bowed down his head to the earth, crying at the same time, "Oh! may I suffer his punishment! may I suffer in *his* stead!"

The Governor, drawing Mr. Williams aside, now offered him a most tempting and extraordinary bribe; viz., to introduce us, sub rosâ, to the interior of the tomb of the patriarchs, that we might touch the very sepulchre of Abraham; might tread the very cave of Machpelah, the precincts of which the foot of a professed Christian has never trod. This tempting offer was most stoically refused: most stoically, I say, for surely the itching humour of man to taste forbidden fruit was here sorely tried. Indeed it was a kind of "*portæ patent,*" so tempting that, had I been alone, I am not sure that I should thus be enabled now to act the trumpeter of stoicism. Carried away by the impulse of

the moment, I might at this time regret the offer, instead of rejoicing at it, as I now do, as having given us an opportunity of impressing upon the chief barbarian, by refusal of so tempting a bait, an Englishman's sense of justice. To cut a long matter short, we, acting in capacity of both judge and jury, called witnesses, (one of whom, to our astonishment, stepped forward voluntarily from the crowd of Moslems, having, it is to be presumed, an old grudge against the prisoner,) and pronounced the man guilty.

We had fully expected to behold the iniquitous physiognomy of the sheikh of Dhoherîyeh when the culprit was produced; but it proved that that sheikh had bribed this man to execute his vengeance upon our party. The Governor offered to inflict bastinado; but we deemed it better to forward a full statement of the case to our Consul at Jerusalem, and, rising, left the Governor in very great dudgeon; for, as he said, he had rather half kill his brother than provoke the anger of the Pasha of Jerusalem. Raising himself to the full height of his noble stature as we drew off, waving his hand on high, and fixing his dark eyes, flashing with fire, upon our Arab sheikh, the leader of our escort, he thundered forth, "Beware, lest thy foot ever again press the soil of my territory!" Thus terminated, as far as we were concerned, this curious adventure, the details of which I have compressed as much as I could con-

sistently with any hope of bringing the scene at all before the eyes of those who were not present.

Again arrived at the Jews' quarter, we were somewhat affected at finding the narrow lanes and passages crowded with the interesting daughters of Israel wailing and wringing their hands, as if the phial of the Moslems' wrath were already poured out upon their devoted heads. For, although in the more civilized regions of the west the

"Tribe of the wandering foot and weary breast"

have, at this time, far less of that "trembling heart and sorrow of mind," hitherto ministered to them so plentifully in the bitter cup of persecution which kings and nations have from age to age compelled them to drain, yet, to this day, amongst the Moslems of the East the iron yoke is still upon them, and still do they cry in the morning, "Would God it were even!" and at even, "Would God it were morning!" Not that the Holy Land is now sodden with their blood, as some few centuries back; but yet are they oppressed and crushed by those who contaminate their inheritance, and victims to peculiar taxes, restrained traffic, and rigid laws relating to them alone. Whatever revolution takes place, whatever cloud of adversity passes over the land, in which, though rightful owners, they are as yet but slaves and strangers, the thunders of the tempest are sure ultimately to burst over *them:* for the curse is still upon them, "for a sign and

for a wonder;" still are they "fed with wormwood, and have water of gall given them to drink."

What more forcible illustration of the humiliating and degraded state of the people of God beneath the tyranny of "the worst of the Heathen," who now possess their fatherland, could have been offered us, than that painful scene we had this day beheld? Those amongst them standing highest in their veneration,—for authority, learning, possessions, and years,—forced before *us*, to crave, with trembling and every sign of humble supplication, for favour towards their haughty oppressors! What a train of meditation upon the present debased state of that marvellous people did this scene fire! Their "plagues" have indeed "been wonderful and great, and of long continuance;" and well may they "be mad for the sight of their eyes that they do see."

It has since been a great subject of wonder to us, why the Governor of Hebron, a man noted for his fierce and determined spirit, should have borne with us as he did; why he should not have ejected us from the town, or hung us up, as David did the murderers of Ishbosheth. He reported afterwards to the Pasha of Jerusalem, that fear of us alone, from our number and good supply of arms, &c., prevailed upon him to admit that the prisoner was guilty, in order to satisfy us. But such a supposition is ridiculous, as, all together,

including muleteers and Arab escort, (who, moreover, were not present until the affair was almost over,) we did not amount to more than fifteen. The fact probably was, that his peculiar position with regard to the Pasha of Jerusalem made him anxious not to call down his wrath upon him, by causing bloodshed; though it proved that he did not so hold him *in terrorem* as not to refuse to give up the offender, when the Pasha a few days after sent soldiers to demand him, in consequence of our statement in our despatch to our Consul. This same Governor of Hebron is noted for the stand he made against Ibrahim Pasha, and the extraordinary manner he escaped at various times being made prisoner by the Egyptian.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EXCURSION TO THE DEAD SEA.

"Shake the dust from off our feet" at the Gates of Hebron.—Juvenile Anakims.—Lot's Burial-place.—Arabs.—Wilderness of Ziph.—Wild Animal.—Dead Sea.—Descent of Cliffs of En-gedi.—Gardens of En-gedi.—Fountain of En-gedi.—Bathe in the Dead Sea.—Gravity of its Waters.—Ascent of Cliffs of En-gedi.—Character of the Dead Sea.—Well of Fresh Water.—Narrow escape of a Horse.

The main street of the city of "El-Khulîl" was now a scene of indescribable confusion, crowded with the inhabitants, who, excited by the late disturbance, had left their houses and their shops to hear the particulars, and anathematize the authors of the late contention. The hour of our intended departure had long passed; the muleteers were struggling, blaspheming, and administering fast and furious blows on all sides, now upon the head of some unlucky caitiff in the way, and now upon the bodies of the wretched mules, vainly endeavouring to force a way through the assembled multitude to the portal of the passage leading to our quarters, in order to be loaded. Another error was here committed; some of the party starting immediately that their beasts of burthen were ready, left others

behind to follow as they might: the consequence of which was, that the rest of us, not liking to be left in the back ground, after a short time followed them, thus leaving several of the servants and mules alone, to come up afterwards. This was very bad policy, and so it proved. After riding on some little distance, and seeing nothing of those who had first departed, we halted nigh "David's pool" for the mules to come up: but waiting for a considerable period, and finding that they came not, I rode back to the town again, and cutting a road through the mob, as well as I could, with my heavy strip of hippopotamus' hide, found a furious encounter going on between one of our Egyptians and an old female Moslem, whilst a general skirmish of words was flourishing amazingly, accompanied with all that excited action and gesticulation which takes the place of Oriental apathy when it is once disturbed. Our baggage-mules meantime were rushing here and there, some with the baggage on their backs, and some with it under their bellies. Mr. Hill, fearing there might be something wrong going on, had now also arrived, and joined me, much to my relief, as the hubbub was so great that it was difficult to know how to act; neither was my indignation at all allayed by receiving across my arm a tremendous thwack, administered by an uninterested Turk, thrashing his way through the multitude. Whether this was intended or accidental, it was impossible to say;

but I would gladly have acted upon the *lex talionis* had it been possible to reach the fellow, who, however, worked onwards, leaving me to chew the cud of bitterness and the smart without hope of redress.

We found that the Egyptian had been endeavouring to cheat the fair follower of the false Prophet out of a piastre or two, upon which she had forthwith arrested him; so, paying the disputed sum, we settled the combat, and then, whipping servants, muleteers, and mules all out of the gates as speedily as possible, shook the dust from off our feet at the city of the Anakims; the modern inhabitants of which, though not quite so gigantic in stature as their forefathers, seem fully as evil disposed, and, judging by what we experienced, do honour to their pedigree. As we traversed the suburbs of the town, some little naked sons of the Prophet cast stones at us, accompanied with shouts evidently not complimentary. And now, leaving the valley of Eshcol behind us with little sorrow, we turned eastward, ascending some considerable hills covered with shrubby bushes of the prickly oak, growing amongst masses of loose rock. The extreme ruggedness of the track impeded us much, and the baggage, badly and hurriedly packed, was continually falling.

An hour or two brought us to the ruinous village of Beni Naim, or Beni Lout, reputed the burial-place of Lot, and the spot where Abraham pleaded

before the Lord, for the doomed cities of the plain; and where the following morning, "having got up early to the place where he stood before the Lord, he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo! the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

Beni Lout stands upon a lofty height overlooking the hilly country of Judæa towards the west, and including in its eastern view the wild and sterile wilderness of Ziph, backed by the stern mountain chain of Moab and of Ammon, the sublime precipices of which, form the eastern boundary of the deep basin of the Asphaltic Lake, its dark waters laving in many parts their very base. We could, however, from this point distinguish but a small portion here and there of the surface of that strange flood, as exposed through deep gorges in the mountains of En-gedi which line its western coast.

In the outskirts of the village, we noticed several ancient excavations in the rock, and also passed what appeared to have been a tank for water cut in the rock, evidently of great antiquity. Some few inhabitants were strolling here and there, wild looking creatures, gaunt and thin, with long visages and piercing eyes, having withal such a hungry rapacious look about them that we were led to make slight circuits, to avoid too close a contact with them. It would have pleased

us to have halted here for a short time, not only urged by a laudable curiosity to examine Lot's sepulchre, but also to examine our larder; for the excitement of the morning had given great zest to our appetites. It was, however, impossible to do so, as we had not yet seen any signs of our friends in advance, except at one time, when from the summit of one ridge, we beheld them, as pismires, passing over the summit of another, many miles a-head, hills, wadys, and ravines innumerable occupying the intervening space. Seizing, therefore, the cold remnant of a dove which I had sacrilegiously slain the day before, I satisfied my hunger, as we trotted down the descent from Beni Lout.

Amongst the stony hills, the eye was cheered every now and then by little valleys not so sterile, the slopes being clothed with arbutus and prickly oak, and in some spots gay with flowers. Presently passing through a wady full of white broom and stunted shrubs, one of our escort suddenly crouched down behind a thick bush, presenting his long gun. Directing our eyes towards the point he aimed at, we beheld an armed Arab advancing towards us on foot, whilst another also followed at a short distance in his rear. Our hands were upon our weapons. The approaching enemy leaped about with curious gesticulations, sometimes couching down behind a bush and presenting his gun at us, then rising again and drawing nearer, with that light springy walk so peculiar to the Arab of the desert. Our guard still kept him

covered with his gun until near at hand, then, suddenly rising on his feet, bounded towards him, rushed into his arms, and kissed him. The embrace was mutual; so, leaving them to hug one another at their leisure, we rode on. Soon after this we once more beheld our party on a rugged ascent in the distance, and hastening forward as fast as the nature of the ground would admit, after a hard chase succeeded in joining them, which was fortunate, as the day was fast closing.

The aspect of the country now was very wild, and the hills intersected with deep ravines, in one of which we noticed, on the opposite side, a most gigantic Arab, who had bestowed none of his patrimony upon raiment: nevertheless, as he strode on, he did not seem to feel that he had laid aside decorum with his habit. We travelled till very late; the shades of evening had now given way to the darkness of night. After traversing for some time the dry bed of a watercourse, exceedingly rough and rocky, we dismounted to encamp, which for my part I was quite ready to do; for, fagged almost as much as my horse, sleep overcame me on my saddle, and my steed followed his companions as he could by the sound of their feet. A fearful stumble, or the rushing of a baggage mule against me, ever and anon disturbed my slumbers most unceremoniously, and once or twice I woke grasping the mane of my horse; had I not had a Turkish saddle my lot would have been sorrowful.

The darkness was so great when we halted that we could not see to search for means of procuring a light; but after a time the Arabs, by some device, set on fire some dry stuff around, which bursting into flame, displayed by its glare a curious scene: dark figures in strange costumes, curiously caparisoned horses, mules laden with huge burthens, mingled in wild confusion, on the declivity of a stony mountain, with the remnant of some battered building nigh at hand, once a santon's tomb, I imagine. The night air was very chill, and, when at last the tent was pitched, right gladly did I throw myself upon my mattress, and, putting my chibook in my mouth, covered myself with everything that came to hand, not even forgetting the under part of my Turkish saddle, which, by the by, was a very gay affair altogether, the seat being covered with black velvet, and the immense pad beneath, covering the body of the horse from the shoulders to almost the tail, composed of large squares of a kind of flannel, laid in layers one over the other, and of divers colours, the outside one scarlet and blue, worked with gold. To the high pummel of the seat itself were attached pistol holsters of black velvet, displaying in gold numerous emblems and devices, amongst which the crescent and the star were of course pre-eminent. This gorgeous work of a Moslem saddler would never have been taken by a Christian brother in the trade for a saddle, unless indeed the secret

were divulged by two large brazen stirrups, suspended to the seat of it by strips of red leather. I had invested 125 piastres, about twenty-five shillings, in this work of velvet and gold, having discovered it in one of the bazaars of the Holy City, and though at first somewhat overcome by the splendour of its appearance, I purchased it, finding no other which I could imagine it possible to sit upon for a journey with any hope of comfort. Neither did I in the end repent my bargain; for it proved quite an easy chair, when I once became habituated to the eccentric style in which the stirrups were slung on, throwing my knees up in the air. For more than three weeks at one time, during my after travels, the pad of this saddle formed my only mattress to lie on at night; rather a short one certainly, but comfortable enough as far as it extended, and well warmed through by the action of my horse during the day.

But to return to our encampment in the wilderness of Ziph. It was two o'clock in the morning before sleep visited my couch of saddle-pads and cloaks, and at four the kicking of horses, and the wild shouts of our muleteers, awoke us to the knowledge that it was time to mount again. At such moments it is that the pleasures of peregrination fade, the sweetness of variety is veiled for a time, and the spirit that cries, "fuge littus amatum" is cast behind you in disgrace.

It was almost as dark as when we encamped over night, and the morning air was bitterly cold;

however, tents struck and mules loaded, once more we were in our saddles, winding on in single files, dreaming of "clusters of camphire in the vineyard of En-gedi."

The country now assumed much the character of the great desert, ridged hills of formal shapes, with scorched and sterile wadys intervening. Yes! we were truly in the wilderness again; a wilderness, indeed, fraught with most stirring interest, for was it not here the jealousy of Saul pursued the steps of his generous enemy? David, driven by the threats of his treacherous father-in-law from Keilah, lurked amidst the mountains of the wilderness of Ziph. To our right, upon the south, lay *Carmel*, in the wilderness of Maon, where "the Lord returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head, and smote him that he died, because that he requited to the son of Jesse evil for good," refusing him, a fugitive and a friend, the rights of hospitality, saying, "Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, that I have killed for my shearers, and give unto men whom I know not whence they be?" And now, also, were we fast approaching En-gedi and its wilderness, whither Saul "went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats," and where in the mountain cave the Lord delivered the King into the hand of the son of Jesse, who smote him not, refusing to stretch forth his hand against "the Anointed of the Lord," though his bitterest enemy, his fierce and unceasing persecutor—a generosity

of heart, which, for a moment, caused banished virtue and shame once more to struggle from the slough of jealous hatred in the royal breast, and so moved the self-convicted soul of Saul, that "he lifted up his voice and wept." But again the treacherous Ziphites fanned the flame of envy, "and Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph." And again the noble fugitive withheld the merited vengeance from his sleeping enemy, crying, "The Lord shall smite him, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's Anointed and be guiltless?"

Such are the touching scenes and events, which, though nigh three thousand years have fled since the period of their happening, still shed an unfading glow of interest over those desolate and trackless deserts bounding the western coast of the Dead Sea,—deserts where the heart of man cowers within his craven breast, trembling at the hollow echo of his own voice.

> "Hark!—
> No, all is hushed and still as death—'Tis dreadful!"

It is the silent territory of the mountain-goat, the wolf, and fox. The Arabs there are few but fierce. 'Tis well for the wanderer to avoid their haunts.

We were now drawing very near the Dead Sea, but as yet had obtained no glimpse of its waters,

since leaving Beni Lout. Traversing a narrow wady, we disturbed a large animal of the deer kind, which, bounding up a rocky slope before us, stood for a moment on the summit gazing towards us and displaying a pair of noble horns; but its timidity forbad any minute examination, and before I could cover it with my telescope in a satisfactory manner, dashing over the brow of the hill, it disappeared. Yet, by galloping round the base of the hill, did I obtain another sight of it, though too distant to distinguish what it might be. Riding up a slight acclivity, suddenly we beheld the southern extremity of the "Dead Sea," and, passing through a cleft in the rock, found ourselves upon the edge of a tremendous precipice, from whence we gazed upon the dark stagnant flood nigh two thousand feet below us. At first it did not appear possible to descend at all to its borders; but taking a slight turn to the right, we followed a little track, so steep and so astonishingly slippery from the nature of the rock, that it was with the utmost difficulty our horses could keep their footing, though they chose each step with the sagacity of rock goats. In many parts the limestone rock, forming the bed of the path, presented a high polish, and, it being of a rounded surface, the greatest care was requisite even for those on foot to pass. The zigzag form of the track, however, enabling us at last to accomplish the perilous descent, both ourselves and our horses were soon quaffing with unbounded delight

the waters of a most beautiful spring, which, gushing from a rock, glided on with the most refreshing murmur, overhung with the richest vegetation,—thick beds of cane, intermingled with extraordinary shrubs and herbs of many kinds quite new to us. Such is the fountain of Ain Jidy, or En-gedi, even now a sweet and refreshing spot, though the "best of palm trees" and the precious *Opobalsam* do not at this day overshadow its waters, as we are led to suppose they did when the Moabites and Ammonites encamped there against Jehoshaphat the King;* when "there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi."†

Tarrying a few minutes beneath a large lote tree, we, giving our horses to our followers to hold, proceeded on foot down a slope of considerable extent, leading to the very shores of the sea. The soil here is exceedingly rich, and we found one or two Arabs employing themselves in weeding beds of a kind of cucumber very much like vegetable marrow, which was thriving luxuriantly: the ground is, indeed, amazingly fertile on this declivity, and well irrigated by the waters from the fountain above. At the foot of this slope we came upon a bed of beach, and quickly stood upon the margin of the most extraordinary sea that man ever gazed upon. A line of dead and prickly rubbish,

* Joseph. Antiq. 9. 1. 1. † 2 Chron. xx. 2.

formed chiefly of thorny boughs of the lote tree, mingled with cane-stalks and other vegetable matter, extended along the margin of the water, thrown up by its sullen waves, and covered with incrustations of salt. Some of us had determined to bathe, that we might prove satisfactorily to ourselves the peculiar properties which, from the time of the Roman naturalist, have been asserted by some, and denied by others, as appertaining to these waters; but the dark and motionless extent before us, with curious lines of floating saline froth streaking its surface, at first rather made our hearts faint within us; neither did the thorny barrier along its edge look at all inviting to cross with naked feet. Three of us did at last, however, venture in, and I do not hesitate to assert that the gravity of the water has been but little, if at all, exaggerated by former travellers. No sooner was I so far in that the water reached the middle of my body, than I found the difficulty great in keeping my feet, and soon floated like a log of wood upon its surface without the slightest exertion, each motion of the water moving me as it would any dead buoyant object, without creating any of that desire to kick and splash which an inexperienced person feels in other seas when, as endeavouring to float, the heaving motion throws him off his balance. Science has now, indeed, unravelled the mysterious properties of this water, proving by the analysis of the fluid, how great must of necessity

be its specific gravity, when compared with other seas, this holding in solution such preponderating proportions of salt. Whilst I was floating on the surface a species of falcon flew from a neighbouring precipice, wheeling over the water in its flight;—a fact only worth mentioning because some have asserted that the noxious vapours arising from it cause the death of any bird venturing near. The nauseous taste of the water of this lake, has been noticed by many travellers, neither is it probable that any one who has once tried it can forget the scalding bitter left upon his palate: the salt, indeed, is so intolerable, that it is impossible to avoid ejecting it almost as soon as it enters the mouth.

Leaving our peculiar bath, we hastily dressed. Then began our sorrows; for a sensation as of being rubbed with red-hot irons invading my skin, rendered me perfectly miserable, whilst an incrustation of salt was on my body, quite sufficient to destroy all comfort, without the acute smarting which it caused. Collecting a quantity of the small portions of the bitumen which is thickly scattered amongst the gravel on the shore, and seeking for but not finding any shells or vestige of shell-fish, we toiled up the ascent towards the fountain, again to join our friends. But Mr. Witts and I, tortured with the excruciating punishment we were suffering for our bathe, were compelled to stop and lave ourselves with the fresh water of the stream.

An attack of the head then seized me, with such severity, that every twenty or thirty yards the sensation of falling was so great as to oblige me to stop for a time. I had not had a mouthful of food since the night before, a circumstance which, combined with my bath, and the now scorching rays of the sun beating on my head, might account for this visitation. The weight of my turban was hardly to be borne, but yet it was perhaps death to take it off; therefore I was fain to content myself by placing between it and my head my companion's handkerchief and my own, well soaked in the cold water of the stream. At last, with infinite toil and pain, we reached once more the fountain itself. Here a grievous disappointment awaited me, for I had fully relied on resting at this spot and getting some breakfast; but it was doomed to be otherwise, the party having already started for the ascent of the fearful precipice which we had descended to the sea, and which, beetling above our heads fifteen hundred feet of almost perpendicular rock, made us utter a cry of despair: however, drinking a deep draught of the water of the fountain, we plucked up our courage and proceeded

We observed in the bed of the fountain of En-gedi numerous and beautiful black buccinums, some of which we collected also on the borders of the sea itself. We did not find, at the point we visited, a vestige of any marine shells, although I

sifted with my hands a quantity of the fine gravel at the edge of the water. Some travellers have asserted that they saw shells upon these shores; but if there are shell-fish or other food for wild fowl in this flood, why are not these birds seen upon its surface, as on all other waters in Syria? I do, therefore, believe that no fish nor other living creature can inhabit its pernicious waters, and that it is literally a *dead* sea.

If it had seemed impossible for horses to *descend* the mighty cliff,* now towering above us, how thoroughly impracticable did the *ascent* appear! However, there were our steeds, sometimes walking carefully along a narrow shelf upon the face of the precipice, and at others scrambling up the slippery track, not without a fearful stumble now and then, making those below tremble for their safety, as the loose stones rattled down. I was now much in the rear, and the pungent salt, of which the pores of my skin were full, produced intense thirst, but not a drop of water was to be had before reaching the summit of the height. Once I rushed forward with desperate exertion, seeing an Arab with a water-bottle above me; but alas! it proved

* The summit of this cliff is probably the spot referred to by the Prophet Jahaziel, who, coming into the assembly convened by Jehoshaphat when he heard that the Moabites and Ammonites "had passed over the lake" and invaded his kingdom, "gave order that the King should draw his forces out next day, for that he should find them between Jerusalem and the ascent of En-gedi, at a place called *The Eminence*," &c., &c.—*Joseph. Antiq.* 9, 1, 2.

empty, as the traveller will generally find the case if he trusts his water-bottle to any one to carry for him, as he will wisely stop and drain it the first opportunity that offers, thereby satisfying their own thirst and lightening their burden. At last reaching the summit of the cliff, and finding our tents pitched, we hastened beneath them. A savoury dish of chicken pilau stood ready: I turned from it with horror and cried for water, but the whole supply had been used for cooking, so I cast myself down, abhorring all manner of meats, in spite of my long fast and labour.

The spot we were now upon commanded a good view of the southern part of the sea, though not quite to its furthest extremity, a jut in the mountains of the western coast shutting it off; whilst the mountains on the eastern coast are at that point considerably retired from the shore, leaving a flat sandy space. There we saw the smoke of an Arab fire rising in a column, which at first I took for one of those columns of vapour mentioned by Irby and Mangles as seen by them upon their approach, and bearing a similitude to water-spouts. But we did not see any such curious evaporations during our short visit. There seemed to be shoals of sand at the southern end of the sea, and our Arabs pointed to a peninsula which they knew as Us-dum, or "Sodom," in the neighbourhood of which the Arabs affirmed the rocks to be composed of salt. The coast exactly opposite our

position presented precipices far loftier, to all appearance, than those of the En-gedi range upon our side. Dr. Robinson, from comparison of bearings taken on the spot, fixes the breadth of the sea at En-gedi at nine geographical miles, and its length at thirty-nine. The breadth near the extremities is much less, and the length varies slightly at different seasons, according, it may be presumed, to the influx from the Jordan, Arnon, and inferior rivers. The estimates given by the ancients as to the magnitude of this sea differ so amazingly from those given by moderns, that there is surely reason to suppose its size has much contracted, perhaps by the increase of its evaporating properties, or by the choking of rivers and streams which formerly emptied into it. Its mere periodical variations, or doubts regarding the stadium or other measurements of the ancients, can hardly be presumed to account for so great a difference in the calculations: for Pliny gives the length at one hundred miles, and the breadth at twenty-five in the broadest part; Diodorus gives the length sixty-two and a-half miles, and the breadth at seven and a-half; Josephus, seventy-two in length, and nineteen in breadth; Irby and Mangles state it at thirty miles in length; Mr. Banks the same; and Dr. Robinson, at thirty-nine, as above. This sea having no known discharge for its superfluous waters, great mystery hung over it for ages, as to what could possibly

become of the six million and ninety thousand tons of water, calculated to be the average daily discharge of the Jordan alone into its basin. Hidden communications with the Mediterranean were suspected, a supposition which Reland, Pococke, and other travellers of note encouraged. But science has divulged the secret; for, according to the computation of Dr. Halley, six thousand nine hundred and fourteen tons of vapour being allowed from every square mile, there would be daily an evaporation of eight million nine hundred and sixty-three thousand tons.

The different analyses given of the water, also, disagree very considerably as to the relative proportions of the various salts held in solution, which may probably be accounted for by some of the experiments having been made on water taken from near the embouchûre of the Jordan, and others on that taken from parts of the sea further south. Or perhaps the nature of the fluid may have been somewhat altered by evaporation, or otherwise, before the making of the experiment, as several of the analyses have been taken after a considerable period had elapsed betwixt the time of taking the water from the sea and that of subjecting it to chemical examination. Latitude should also be given as to the clashing accounts of its gravity, according to that part of the sea entered by the narrators.

As to the relative level of this sea and the

Mediterranean, it cannot, as Dr. Robinson observes, be satisfactorily ascertained until a trigonometrical survey has been taken of the intervening country; but the depression of the level of the former below that of the latter sea, is doubtless very great. Messrs. Moore and Beke, who first calculated it in 1837, finding it 500 English feet, and Schubert 598·5 Paris feet; whilst Russegger and Berton give it at 1,300 Paris feet.*

I should very much like to have spent several days in the neighbourhood of this extraordinary sheet of water. A most delightful spot to tarry for a time might be found at the fountain of En-gedi; for who that has seen it will deny that En-gedi is a "garden" still, and wildly beautiful, though mourning its palm-trees and opobalsam,† its clusters of camphire, and its vineyards? There might one gaze at leisure over "the sea of the plain, even the salt sea," covering with its dense waters the slime-pits of the vale of Siddim, where the Kings of Sodom and of Gomorrah, of Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela joined battle with "Chedorlaomer, the King of Elam, and with Tidal, King of nations, Amraphel, King of Shinar, and Arioch, King of Ellasar; four kings with five;" and where stood the proud cities of the plain of Sodom and Gomorrah, until that sun rose which saw Lot enter into Zoar. Halting here, however, for any length of time was out of the question with us, as we

* Rob. Bib. Res. v. 2. † Josephus Antiq. 9. 1. 2.

had made no provision for so doing, and some of the party were limited as to time: therefore, we turned our backs upon the "accursed" flood, viewed with horror and mysterious awe by the wild race of men who inhabit its stern and rugged shores; and, with considerable regret, from "the eminence" of En-gedi I bestowed my farewell gaze upon that country once held by the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, "whose land lieth in clods of pitch and heaps of ashes."* Meditation, having thrust aside the veil of ages, yielded with reluctance to stern necessity, forbidding her to revel amidst the palm and balsam-groves shadowing the fair cities which she beheld reflecting their magnificence in the waters of a bright lake adorning that fertile valley,† over which the pleading patriarch had doubtless often gazed with delight, before the flood-gates of Heaven's wrath poured forth the tempest of fire and brimstone upon the guilty cities of the plain. Now is that vale submerged by the heavy flood of "Asphaltitis," a fetid sea of bitumen and bitter salt, where the sweet waters of the Jordan before expanded, begetting luxuries even from Jericho to Zoar in Arabia; for was it not "of old a most happy land,

* 2 Esdras ii. 8, 9.

† "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar."—Gen. xiii. 10.

both for the fruits it bore, and the riches of its cities, although it be now all burned up?"*

I was still suffering considerably from a flow of blood to the head and extreme thirst when we proceeded on our journey, so that every motion of the horse was very painful; but after some time, a cry of "Water!" from those in front led me to hasten up, and there was a large cistern cut under a rocky cliff, with steps down to it, and a good supply of water, the virtue of which I immediately proved. I found it most excellent and refreshing, being enriched, doubtless, in flavour by the presence of two or three of our followers, who had turned it into a wash-tub before I reached its margin. One in particular was performing his ablutions with such exactitude, that, after satisfying my thirst, I anathematized him to the best of my ability for befouling the precious spring, and calling him forth, made him pour water over my head from one of the skins, in spite of his protestations that it was a most dangerous expedient.

We passed this day through wild and curious scenery, ascending and descending many rocky passes which tested the sagacity of our mules and horses. The former called for the greatest sympathy, their broad and heavy burdens often placing them in jeopardy, when traversing ledges with a perpendicular face of rock on one side and a precipice on the other. In the descent of one ravine, an unfortunate horse almost closed his labours by

* Joseph. B. J. 4. 8. 4.

running out upon a jutting crag of rock, instead of pursuing the proper track. It was curious to see the poor brute, evidently much alarmed at his position, attempting to turn back again, but not able to do so on account of the narrowness of the point he was on: then casting his eyes down into the ravine below, he saw his only chance lay that way, and presently, to the utter astonishment of all, down he came with rock and rubble, reaching the bottom without more grievous injury than tearing away a little of the flesh from his ribs. Then did a cloud come over my star, and, my saddle-girts breaking during the ascent upon the opposite side of this mountain rent, I quickly found myself upon my back across a rough mass of rock, with a sensation as if all my limbs were broken; but sitting down to count my sores, it proved that I had escaped even freer than our gallant steed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

EXCURSION TO THE DEAD SEA.

Defile of Kedron.—Convent of St. Saba.—Holy Fathers alarmed.—Controversies of the Fourth Century.—"Turdus cyaneus."—Cray-fish.—Englishman robbed and wounded by Arabs.—Black Fetid Limestone.—Plains of Jericho.—Gazelles.—Jordan.—Bathe in the Jordan.—"Pride of Jordan."—Narrow Escape.—Report of Arabs.—Nûkb-tree.—Jericho.—Arab Encampment.—Jackalls.—Mount Quarantana.—Spring cured by Elisha.—Modern Jericho, &c. &c.

THE hour was late when, turning westward, we entered a chasm in the mountains, formed by the course of the brook Kedron, a most rough and rocky pass, in darkness, terrible. A fearful scrambling ever and anon announced a catastrophe, whilst the hoarse cries of the Arabs and the groans of the injured filled the night air. Harsh jutting rocks crushed the legs of the rider, making him writhe upon his saddle; hardly was one wound received than another was given, a series of Scyllas and Charybdises lining the narrow way without emitting any warning howls. A light glimmered presently upon the lofty precipice to our left; the deep toll of a bell was heard, breaking with its melancholy sound the silence of the dark ravine. The cele-

brated monastery of St. Saba was above us, where, midst precipices almost inaccessible and topling crags, that holy anchorite, its founder, sought an undisturbed retreat: but in vain; for even there, amidst that rocky desolation, echoed those furious controversies which, in the fourth century, shook and tore the Church with divers schisms, giving birth to sanguinary civil wars and raging discord, begotten of a question, the veiled mysteries of which, man, whilst mortal, can never penetrate,—a question, "as to the nature of Christ." Vainly the Fourth General Council of Chalcedon strove to stop the strife by inculcating that rule of faith now generally received, "that in Christ *two distinct natures* were united *in one person*, and that without any change, mixture, or confusion." In mockery, as it were, the violence of unchristian contests raged louder than before, and the orthodox St. Saba was forced from the rocky cliffs of the Kedron to fulminate anathemas from Calvary against the Patriarch of Antioch, the monophysite Severus.

We found it a severe climb to reach the saint's aerial nest, and my horse breaking from my grasp, in its struggles to save itself from a fall, bolted away, with the saddle dragging on the ground, leaving his rider, anathematizing the ascent, to try the descent, seated upon a bed of rolling rubble. A friendly tuft of some bushy plant, however, saved me a very unpleasant ride.

Arrived at the convent, we shouted for some

considerable time before any signs of life within its dismal walls became visible. A responding cry was at length, however, heard, and a monk came forth stealthily, dubious as to who we were, and what might be our intentions: for the holy brotherhood, having heard the trampling of horses and cries of Arabs midst the darkness, had hastily barred and bolted their vast portals, thinking a marauding party of desert robbers were upon them. It was the toll of the alarm bell that had struck upon our ears as we approached. A light was brought forth, and, after traversing many passages, we were ushered into a large room, with a long table in the centre, and divans around. Bread and wine were set before us by an aged father. The first mouthful of food I tasted that day then passed my lips, and in ten minutes I was careless of all sublunary things or events, stretched in deep sleep upon one of the divans,—a sleep, however, soon broken in upon by the arrival of our baggage train, the mules belonging to which had been sent by another route, in order to avoid the difficult pass by which we reached the convent. Canteens, blankets, mattresses, came rolling in, with other campaigning necessaries. Tea, coffee, chibooks, all appeared: but sleep forbad me to pay that attention to them which I had meditated, and when I again became sensible to passing events, a bright sun was shining in my face, and the melodious song of a bird greeted my ear. Listening for a moment, I

sprang from my couch, for in those sweet notes did I hail an old acquaintance, the beautiful "blue thrush" of Italy, (turdus cyaneus, or "passera solitaria,") whose soft music is often heard amidst the festooned vines of that sunny land, gladdening the heart of the Italian peasant, who regards the passera solitaria as an angel of good augûry, and laments its death as a calamity, not grudging it a full share of his figs and grapes, which form its chief sustenance. When I was at Siena, in Tuscany, a pair of these birds had built their nest upon the crumbling walls of an ancient palazzo opposite my windows, where I often sat and watched them basking in the mid-day sun, with outspread wings, then running round in circles, with their crests erected and wings in full motion, singing as if in ecstasy, every action betokening the utmost enjoyment of existence. Once I shot one for a specimen amongst the Appennines, which brought upon my head the just reproof of a bronze-faced warm-hearted peasant for taking away the life of a bird having "*il canto d'un angelo.*" The brave and amiable Francis the First of Angouleme, delighting in their music, it is said, procured from Smyrna many of them, to cheer him with their warbling when retired from the din of the battle-field. Solitude and sunshine is their delight; amongst the cliffs of the Kedron, and the towers of St. Saba's venerable pile, they find both.

This convent of St. Saba, or "Mâr Sâba," is a

striking edifice, being of most irregular structure, and so amalgamated with the natural rock, that, viewing it from below, it is difficult to say what is the work of nature, what of man. It occupies a vast space upon the face of a precipice, lying in terraces partly natural and partly artificial. Turrets, towers, and walls, are all founded on naked rock, or cut out of the rock itself. Within its walls are also grottoes cut in the cliff, one or two of which, it seemed to me, could not be attained without ropes. Here, ever and anon, a holy brother, impatient even of the little world within the convent walls, retires, to seek a deeper solitude and repose, to propitiate his Deity with a sacrifice of

> "Moody and dull melancholy,
> Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair;"

then die like a wild beast in a hole in the rock, but in the odour of sanctity!

We had a much better breakfast spread before us in the morning than we had a supper over night, the monks producing some good bread-cakes, and a fat hen, which made a very good fricasee. Moreover, one of the party, after breakfast, came running in with something doubled up in his handkerchief which he proclaimed a cray-fish! thus causing visions of a second course of luxuries to rise before us; but, alas! when he unfolded his treasure, forth rushed a huge white scorpion, with his tail

over his back, rampant with wrathful indignation at the summary manner in which he had been made prisoner. The sting of these white scorpions is said to be very virulent, even more so than that of the red Italian scorpion; from the wound inflicted by which species, indeed, many instances of death have occurred. I was informed by an Italian at Cairo, that the application of sal volatile, or spirits of harts-horn, is a certain antidote against the poison of this reptile, but I never had occasion to prove its efficacy.

We found this morning that one of our muleteers had absconded, and taken with him his mule; for there was no provender at the convent, and the poor beasts had not had anything to eat since leaving Hebron two days before. The last day they had been sixteen hours upon the journey with very little water, and for that little, indeed, they had to thank us, not their owners; as, when we arrived at the spring I have mentioned, on our way from the Dead Sea to Mâr Sâba, I verily believe they would have had no water given them, had not some of us brought up a few skins-full from the cistern, and poured it out in a hollow rock for them, whilst the muleteers were either washing themselves, or sitting, with their hands before them, lost in apathy.

After we had finished our breakfast this morning, Mr. Witts and myself, leaving the convent to seek a good spot in the ravine below to sketch, were shown out by a small door, or rather window,

arrived at by passing through what appeared to be the bakehouse of the establishment. Letting down a kind of ladder, we then descended upon a terrace overhanging the ravine, the bottom of which we ultimately arrived at by means of a flight of steps, and found upon the opposite cliff a spot affording a favourable view for my friend's pencil, whilst I roamed about in search of plants and insects. The rock along this side of the valley is pierced in many places with caves of ancient anchorites, some of which dismal gentlemen must have vied in activity with the mountain goat, I should think; for in many parts of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, you see these excavations in most inaccessible places.

Ascending again to the convent, we visited the church, abounding with gingerbread ornaments and works of art, yclept paintings by the devotees who bow within its tinselled walls: and early in the day, bidding adieu to our Greek hosts, we passed beneath the vast portal of the gloomy sanctuary, upon our starved steeds. A large party from Jerusalem arrived that moment at the convent, composed chiefly of missionaries lately come into the Holy Land,—Americans, I believe. They brought us news that an English traveller had fallen amongst thieves, the day before, upon the plains of Jericho (whither we were bound), and had been stripped and wounded. I afterwards had the pleasure of travelling for many weeks in the com-

pany of this victim to the Arabs, whose case thus reached us at Mâr Saba, and here a passing notice of his adventure may be pardoned.

It seems that, amongst other Frank travellers, Mr. Giesler had proceeded with the pilgrims to the Jordan upon the day of the great washing, but that, after the filthy multitude had duly defiled the waters of that sacred stream and again withdrawn towards Jerusalem, he had tarried awhile to sleep within his tent, then mounting, with only one attendant, proceeded across the plain to rejoin the retreating pilgrims. However, suddenly, without the slightest warning that any of the modern lions of the Jordan were at hand, he found himself stretched on his back upon the sands by a blow received from behind, and looking up, beheld a *genius loci*, in the form of a wild Arab, hovering around him on horseback, and pricking at him with the point of his long lance, in order to keep him quiet. One gentle stab, passing through a Mackintosh and thick coat, placed a half-inch or so of cold iron in his breast, to remind him that it was better to yield his body than his soul: so he wisely resigned himself to fate, and the enemy (of whom there were six) commenced their operations as *valets de chambre*. Finding they were not very expert in their office, my friend made signs to them that he would dispense with their services, and undress himself; which he did, earnestly entreating at the same time to keep one garment; but

in vain, for they turned him out to search for fig-leaves midst the tamarisks and prickly nûbk-trees, then, mounting with their booty, disappeared. One, however, more merciful than the rest, did, on the eve of departure, throw back to him a battered old hat, receiving which with gratitude, he forthwith made the best of his way to an Arab settlement at Jericho, where he lay in state, wrapped in a blanket, for a day and a night, whilst a messenger was sent to Jerusalem for another wardrobe, and the means of returning to the city, the Arabs having seized his horses as well as his raiment. In fact, the former doubtless were the greatest object. His servant was treated better than himself, for the robbers returned him his nethermost garment; it being, I presume, much in the same condition as the aforesaid hat. Such is the tale, so far as memory permits me to record the event, after having heard it many times related from the mouth of the sufferer. How it terminated I do not exactly bear in mind: but the Pasha pretended, as usual in such cases, to interest himself about it, and a report was brought to Constantinople, where afterwards we were in company, that two Arabs from Jericho, having taken to Nablous an English watch for sale, quarrelled over the proceeds, when the Governor of that place interfered, shot them both, and sent the watch to Jerusalem: but whether this report was true or false I know not.

Now to return to the spot where first we heard of this occurrence. Turning our horses' heads north-east, we pushed on, purposing to encamp that night at Jericho, after visiting the Jordan on the way. Leaving, therefore, the dull convent and the deep but now dry bed of the Kedron behind us, we pursued our course over a still rugged and desolate country to the mountain of Neby Mûsa, the range of which founds its eastern base upon the north-western shore of the Dead Sea, near "Ain-el-Feshkhah," a fountain, the waters of which are reported to be copious, but not of the sweetest quality, and, moreover, of a warm temperature, as is the case with almost all the waters of the springs in the volcanic neighbourhood of the Dead Sea.

Whilst traversing this mountainous district, we observed masses of the black fetid limestone which has obtained the inelegant name of "stinkstone," from the German appellation *stinkstein*, and which I have before mentioned as worked into cups and amulets. On the ascent of Neby Mûsa, picking up a good specimen, I preserved it. The outer coat being whitish, you do not observe its nature until it is broken: then its substance proves black, and, upon friction, a strong smell is emitted. Dr. Clarke informs us that there is much of the same kind of bituminous smell often discovered in black marble, but not in so remarkable a degree as in this stinkstein. He also states that

many of the Gothic monuments in France are of fetid limestone; but, I apprehend, it must be of a very different substance than that we are now speaking of, which is not of a nature to withstand the variations of atmosphere, particularly after being subjected to the chisel, as it is both brittle and somewhat porous.

Upon the summit of Neby Mûsa is a rough stone building, in ruins, but of no antiquity. A tradition hangs over this spot that here Moses died; though of course without the slightest foundation, as by reference to the Bible narrative of the death of that "servant of the Lord" must clearly appear. Jebel Attarus, which lies south-east of Neby Mûsa, on the opposite coast of the Dead Sea, has been fixed upon by Seetzen, Burckhardt, and other travellers, as that "mountain of Nebo" from whence "Moses, the servant of the Lord, beheld that land which God sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed;" and of which it was said unto him, "I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither;" and where, having thus beheld it, the spirit of the "man of God" left him, and "he died there, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord." But whether the top of Pisgah is, in truth, on Jebel Attarus is very doubtful; for neither does the position of that mountain well accord with the Bible narrative. From Neby Mûsa we beheld a great space of that

portion of the valley of *El Ghôr* which is to the north of the Dead Sea, and almost immediately below us stretched forth the plains of the valley of Jericho, the "City of Palm-trees." Dismounting near the old building, we carefully examined our arms, and loaded our guns afresh, that we might be prepared in case we should fall amongst thieves going down to Jericho: for the Beni-Szaker Arabs, to the east of the Jordan, are indeed dangerous neighbours, and always prepared to dash across the stream upon their fiery horses to plunder pilgrims to the sacred river. Their tribe is powerful, devoted to war and rapine, and, as Burckhardt tells us, they are proud of their descent from the Beni-Abs, famed for deeds of prowess in Bedouin history. The Beni-Szakers carry lances of enormous length, with an iron head, the shaft being formed of a large cane from the country bordering the Tigris. I never handled but one, and that I found excessively light, but, from its extreme length, I could not throw it any distance; nor do the Arabs themselves, using it rather for piercing an adversary whilst in the hand. Moreover, their expertness in striking an enemy behind them, by turning the head of the lance back, and so striking at the pursuer, is said to be very great.

Keeping well together, three or four of our escort being sent forward to spy from the heights around, we descended towards the plain by a gentle but long declivity. Arrived there, we

found considerable tracts of scorched herbage in some places, amongst which were many gazelles, bounding fleetly away upon our approach. Seeing a little mound at a distance, I rode off towards it, in spite of the shouts of the party to recall me to the main body,—shouts loud enough to have awakened all the Amalekitish tribes betwixt the Salt Sea and the Sea of Chinnereth. That which had attracted my attention proved to be a mass of stones denoting a Bedouin grave; so, turning back again, I joined my friends. It is not, perhaps, advisable to leave your party in this manner where there is any doubt as to safety; for Arabs conceal themselves in so extraordinary a manner, that even on a bare plain you may sometimes come upon one without the slightest notice, and where there is the smallest bush or herbage it is next to impossible to descry them when crouched down, the colour of their habit assimilating much with the scorched vegetation.

We presently cut across a broad sink in the plain, apparently a watercourse, during the rains running north and south, and luxuriantly clothed with tamarisks, oleanders, and other shrubs unknown to us. Then did we presently arrive at a thicket of tamarisks and thorny underwood, forming, as we neared the banks of the river, quite a jungle. Trees and shrubs of many species dip their weeping boughs into the waters of the Jordan, the course of which we now beheld, in aspect a rapid muddy stream.

Dismounting, we rushed into it, those who could swim striking out into the mid-current; rather unwisely, as it appeared, for one of the party, though a skilful swimmer, alarmed us much by being carried by the force of the stream to a spot where numerous currents met and caused a strong eddy. In vain he struck with all his power one way and the other, for not a stroke advanced him; until at last, his situation becoming desperate, Nebo, Peor, Pisgah, and all the mountains of Abarim, resounded with lusty shouts for a rope.—The drowning man might as well have called for a boat! His own exertions, and a hand stretched out by Mr. Williams, eventually saved us a painful catastrophe, though we doubted whether Mr. Witts, who had gallantly struck out into the mid-stream to his assistance, would not have become entrapped in the same manner by the treacherous waters. That gentleman's little Syrian servant had also a struggle to regain his footing when, upon first going into the stream, he ventured too far. It is, indeed, by no means a safe spot, and one or two devotees at the great washing generally prove it their last pilgrimage. Such was the case at the late ceremony, two of those then present being carried away to find a nauseous grave in the Asphaltic Lake.

Our escort were spying around whilst we were thus disporting ourselves in the waters of the Jordan, and one on a neighbouring height reported

that he saw a party of horsemen cross the river below, and retire to an old ruin not far distant, as if for concealment. Filling a skin full of the precious water, according to a promise imposed upon me long before my arrival in these inhospitable regions, I gave it to an Arab to carry, and we took our route to Jericho, making a circuit to avoid the reported enemy. The width of the Jordan at the spot we entered it, was, I should suppose, at that time, about forty feet, the water not being at its height by any means, though this must have been about the season when "the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord," at which time it is related that "the waters flowed over all his banks"—"for Jordan overfloweth all his banks in time of harvest;" and now was the very time of harvest, being the last week in April, when the barley harvest is nearly at an end. Though it never now overflows its banks to any extent, as by our version of the Bible we are led to suppose it did of old, yet it is, without doubt, often at a greater height in some harvest seasons than we found it; a variation to be accounted for by the quantity of rain which may happen to have fallen in the winter, and the absorption of that rain, in proportion to the previous more or less thirsty state of the country, before it runs off by the channels of escape assigned it. It remains a question why the Jordan should have "forgotten its greatness?" why, if it did ever

inundate its banks to the extent that has been assumed, it should not present the same phenomenon at this day? Dr. Robinson contends that the expression in the English version of the sacred writ, where the Jordan is said "to overflow all its banks," dwindles in the Hebrew original to "was full (or filled) up to all its banks; meaning," as he observes, "the banks of its channel; it ran with full banks, or was brimful, which sense," says he, "is also given by the Septuagint and Vulgate." The phrase "swelling of Jordan," which is one of the expressions from which an inundation has been inferred, is rendered by the learned Professor, "pride of Jordan," as in Zech. xi. 3: "There is a voice of the howling of shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of the Jordan is spoiled;" the original being the same, he tells us, in both those passages. Then the beautiful allusion of Jeremy the prophet, "he shall come up like a lion from the swellings of Jordan, against the habitations of the strong," implies not an inundation, but merely alludes to the luxuriant thicket along its banks; the "pride of the Jordan," a fine covert for wild beasts, sallying forth from whence they made their depredations. And again, admitting this translation, in Jeremiah xii., where the Almighty, answering the cries of the prophet, is represented as saying, "If in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they

wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the *swelling of Jordan?*" the proverbial expression is not intended to represent danger under the type of an *inundation* carrying destruction before it, as generally supposed, but under the image of a district covered with impenetrable thicket, abounding in wild beasts and other perils. The assumption, then, that the Jordan did anciently cover with its waters, at stated seasons, portions of the plain around, is, it almost appears, without foundation. The aspect of the country in its vicinity, and the presence of the vast reservoirs of Merom and Tiberias offering their wide surfaces for the reception of the falling rains and melting snows of Anti-Lebanon and hoary Hermon, may certainly tend to repudiate the idea that the waters of "the great river" ever overspread, to any great extent, the country it traverses betwixt Tiberias and the Dead Sea. As to its doing so at the present day, Maundrell, who visited the river in March, observes, that he "could find no signs or probability of such overflowings." Irby and Mangles, who crossed the ford near Beisân, at the upper part of the Ghôr, in the same month, found the stream 140 feet across, and rapid, but no inundation; and Mr. Bankes found a ford at some distance below the above, easy to cross on horseback; and the same traveller, with Mr. Buckingham, again forded it in January, south of Jericho, and found it about twenty-five yards in breadth, shallow and easily fordable.

The water of the Jordan is sweet and soft, though of a thick appearance. Soon after we left its banks for Jericho, calling the Arab whom I had freighted with the waters, it proved, to my great indignation, that he had drained the skin, which, with the utmost *sang froid*, he presented me emptied; and not content with this, as I threw it at his head in my wrath, he stole that also. We drew near to the Tower of Jericho, about two hours and a-half after leaving the river, having traversed a track covered thickly in some parts with a kind of tamarisk, and a willow-like shrub, said to be the "*vitex agnus castus*" of Hasselquist. The latter chiefly confines itself, however, to the banks of the river, and the little sinks in the plain, where, in the rainy season, water probably flows. In many places the plain is bare of vegetation, and covered with a white nitrous powder, resembling that which may be seen in many parts of Egypt, and to which the Egyptian soil greatly owes its fertility. I sought upon the way for that species of truffle mentioned by Buckhardt as found here after the vernal rains, and eaten by the Arabs boiled in water or milk, or sometimes roasted or dried in the sun; but I could not find any specimens.

Now did it become very dusk, as, drawing close to the miserable hovels of Jericho, we wandered through the thick groves of the nûbk-tree, avoiding with difficulty its thorny branches. Doubtless it was to this species of tree that the luxuriant locks of the rebellious son of David betrayed him; and as

one of the treacherous branches caught my turban from my head, I congratulated myself that I had not the flowing hair of Absalom, lest, suspended there, the darts of the Beni-Szakers had found me. Not stopping to encamp precisely at Jericho, or Rîha, as the Arabs call it, we pushed on about half an hour farther, passing through the centre of an Arab settlement on the way, being a large circle enclosed with tents joined one to the other, surrounded with a defence of thorny bushes outside, and within crowded with men, women, children, and dogs. The last were very noisy, but the others couching round their fires, merely bestowed one dark flashing look on us as we passed. It was night when we arrived at our encampment upon the margin of that stream, referring to which it is said, "And Elisha went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more dearth or barren land." Truly do its banks now testify the freshness of its flood, for the nûbk, the lôte, and the fig-tree, grow here in their greatest strength, while reeds and coarse grass luxuriate in patches beneath them. The sweet water ran on in a rapid murmuring stream, delightful melody to our ears; the stern and lofty mountain *Quarantana* stood forth gigantic in the evening shade, its mighty form rent in thousand chasms, black and gloomy; whilst above expanded the canopy of heaven, illumined with its countless myriads of worlds, glistening with a splendour

unknown to occidental skies; when, creeping into my tent, though loth to leave the scene, I drew my bernoose about me, and without further ceremony, was lulled off to sleep by the wailings of a troop of jackalls hovering round the settlement. At these during the night I endeavoured to get a shot: but their subtlety equals their rascality, so that it is seldom one can get near them. They are, indeed, rather a benefit than a bane to the inhabitants of the country, destroying, like the vulture, all carrion or garbage that may fall in their way: and probably the dead bodies of the Arabs are also often "a portion for foxes," or jackalls (for doubtless such is the "fox" of Scripture). They do not, however, entirely confine themselves to such food; for with the wolf they are said to eat various roots, and some fruits, and thus in Cant. ii., "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes."

The following morning we breakfasted beneath the lôte-trees, looking forth upon an open plain, extending westward to the base of Mount Quarantana. A ruined building was nigh at hand, presenting three arches built of rough stones, and of the pointed style; the crumbling remnant, probably, of an ancient monastery, or, perhaps, of some Saracenic structure which stood here when the culture of the sugar-cane was attended to upon this spot, and sugar-mills and habitations for the manufacturers were raised around. Such, there is

reason to suppose, was once the case in the neighbourhood of Jericho; the Saracens being related to have acquired the art of preparing sugar long before that article was known to the European, and foundations of ancient buildings being discovered in the neighbourhood, known, it is said, to the Arabs as ancient sugar-mills. Betwixt our encampment and the base of Quarantana, were other traces of former buildings, but not sufficient to prove their character. The rugged mountain itself, was not, indeed, without inhabitants in ages past, as numerous anchorites once dwelt in the gloomy caves which may now be seen excavated in its stupendous cliffs. For has not tradition consecrated its lofty heights as that "exceeding high mountain," whither the evil one led the Saviour of the world, and showed him the glory thereof, after "he had fasted forty days and forty nights?" As to these numerous and large caves, however, which give this mountain so remarkable an appearance, we are not to suppose that the anchorites had either industry or skill sufficient to form them. Rather let us attribute them to such as the Kenites, to whom "Balaam, the son of Beor," cried, "Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock;" or to such as the brave and noble Hyrcanus, who, driven from Jerusalem by the Elders, retired to the mountains, where he made "caves of many furlongs in length, by hollowing a rock that was over against him; and

Drawn from Nature by Dawson Burns, Lithgraph.

Day & Haghe lith^rs to the Queen.

JEBEL KHŪRŪNTŪL, OR MOUNT QUARANTANA, (FROM THE PLAIN OF JERICHO.)

So named, as being the place where Our Lord for forty days

then he made large rooms in it, some for feasting, and some for sleeping and living in;"* or to the Asamoneans or Maccabees; to such as the zealous Mattathias, or the valiant Judas, who having overthrown the idol altar of Antiochus, and slain his general enforcing ungodly sacrifices, "fled with their children and wives into the desert, and dwelt in caves," whither the king's generals pursued them, and, taking advantage of the Jewish reverence for the Sabbath, "burnt them as they were within the caves, without resistance;" at which time, as the historian tells us, "there were about a thousand with their wives and children, who were smothered, and died in these caves."† Who, then, can behold, without deep interest, these gloomy recesses, which have often proved sepulchres to that determined race, unsurpassed in history for zealous observance of the laws of their religion, carrying it to such superstitious excess as often to have sacrificed their lives, "because they were not willing to break in upon the honour they owed the Sabbath, even in such distresses?"

Upon two lofty peaks of the mountain are the remains of two little chapels, once, probably, inhabited by recluses, but now in ruins. Hasselquist partly climbed this mountain, which he describes as of a mixture of white and grey limestone. It is "dangerous beyond imagina-

* Joseph. Antiq. 12. 4—11. † Joseph. Antiq. 12. 6.

tion" to attempt reaching the summit; whither, therefore, he sent his servant rather than risk his own neck, and himself incontinently descended with—"a NEW BUG!" to repay him for his daring.

About ten minutes to the north of our encampment was the fountain-head of the delightful stream which here waters the plain. It is partly surrounded with rough masonry of ancient date, and the wild fig, the beautiful oleander, and the graceful tamarisk overhang its pellucid water. By the numerous fragments of stone upon the eastern side of the basin, lying thickly together amongst a thicket of nûbk-bushes, I should imagine a building once stood close to its waters; and betwixt the western margin and the mound at the foot of which the spring bubbles forth, may be seen evident marks of an ancient causeway. I made a rough and hasty sketch of this spot, suspicious of an Arab in the thicket close at hand, who was intently watching me, casting at the same time a kind of envious eye upon my gun, which I carefully kept between my knees: for it is in truth a spot where the hand should rather grasp the gun than the pencil, as one of our escort tried to impress upon me; but finding me wilful, he left me to my fate.

Everything within the neighbourhood of this fountain betokens the site of an ancient settlement; mounds and stones, with here and there traces of foundations, being scattered far and wide around.

As at Rîhah itself, no remains of antiquity are to be met with to identify its position with that of ancient Jericho; the precise spot which the "City of Palms" occupied, therefore remains doubtful. Though the village of Rîhah is generally presumed to mark it, Mr. Buckingham mentions ruins and tumuli at the foot of the mountains to the west of the plain, upon the way from Jerusalem to Jericho, and four miles from Rîhah, which he considers as probably pointing out the true site of the ancient city, deeming that position to agree with Josephus's account of the local situation of the "City of Palms," more accurately than the site occupied by the village of Rîhah. Still there seems little to identify the former as being the true site. Mr. Buckingham moreover, relates that there was no water in the neighbourhood when he was there, although in the month of January; and it appears hardly probable, that so great a city as Jericho should be founded at a spot away from springs of water, when a mile or two further on they would have found a copious supply from the never-dying fountain of Ain-es-Sultan, as that is called near which we were encamped. There is little doubt that this is the fountain which Josephus refers to where he says, "There is a fountain by Jericho, that runs plentifully, and is very fit for watering the ground; it arises near the old city, which Joshua, the son of Nun, the General of the Hebrews, took, the first of all the cities of the land of Canaan, by right of

war." And this, we have reason to believe, is the fountain, the waters of which responded to the prayer of Elisha, "that the current might be mollified, and that the veins of fresh water might be opened; that God also would bring into the place a more temperate and fertile air for the current, and would bestow upon the people of that country plenty of the fruits of the earth, and a succession of children; and that this prolific water might never fail them while they continued to be righteous."*

Dr. Robinson made a considerable search for any remains of the splendour of the tyrant Herod, but found none to answer at all to those magnificent works with which, it appears, he embellished Jericho after he had obtained from Anthony's flagitious Queen a grant to farm "those revenues that came to her from those regions about Jericho."†

It is as well, then, still to regard the village of Rîhah as not being far from the true site, nothing satisfactory appearing to rob it of the dignity it claims by retaining a name, which assimilates in sound as well as sense with the Hebrew word "Rahhab," "a perfume, or sweet smell:"‡ thus tending to justify the opinion that Rîhah humbly represents the city in which that harlot

* Joseph. B. J. 4. 8. 3.

† Joseph. Antiq. 15. 4.

‡ Buckingham, v. 2.

dwelt, who hospitably concealed the spies sent out of Shittim by Joshua, the son of Nun.

The modern village consists of a miserable collection of huts, covered over with boughs of the thorny nûbk, and surrounded with a defence of the same material, so arranged as to form a barrier to an enemy. About fifty families dwell there, being a class of those tribes comprehended under the name of "Arabs of the Ghôr," which chiefly inhabit the intervening plains between the Dead Sea and the Lake of Tiberias. Those dwelling about Jericho are reported to be extremely licentious. The large encampment we passed through the night of our arrival belonged to Arabs from the surrounding neighbourhood, who had gathered together for the harvest. Our followers held them in great distrust, and kept a strict guard during the night. They, however, seemed very well inclined to be civil during the day: one, indeed, waited upon me with much greater attention than I deemed pleasant, following me wherever I went, so that I could not, with any comfort, put down my gun to take out my drawing-book, lest he should appropriate it, having, seemingly, a great taste for European fire-arms, and making signs that he would bestow upon me his own old matchlock in exchange for my Manton, a barter which of course I was anxious to avoid.

The tract around Jericho, and along the whole course watered by the stream which Elisha cured,

might with little trouble produce the richest crops of grain and fruits; but the indolence of the natives will not suffer them to redeem "those most excellent gardens thick set with trees," those groves of balsam, of palms, of cypress, and myrobalanum, the beauty and precious produce of which led the Jewish historian to exclaim, "he who should pronounce this place to be *divine* would not be mistaken, wherein is such plenty of trees produced, as are very rare, and of the most excellent sort; and indeed, if we speak of other fruits, it will not be easy to light on any climate in the habitable earth that can well be compared to it,—what is here sown comes up in such clusters."* The covetous Queen of Egypt would find little now to excite her cupidity; none of that precious root which the Queen of Sheba is said to have introduced to Judæa amongst the costly presents that she made to Solomon; that balsam, which, thus originally brought from Ethiopia, tradition says was afterwards transferred to Egypt by Cleopatra, where for centuries it flourished in the lovely gardens of the "City of the Sun." Yet is there at this day a kind of balsam prepared from the nuts of a tree called by the Arabs zûkkûm, which Pococke considers identical with the myrobalanum, and Dr. Robinson states to be the *elæagnus angustifolius* of Hasselquist. Josephus says, the true balsam, that "ointment of

* Joseph. B. J. 4. 8. 3.

all the most precious, upon any incision made in the wood with a sharp stone, distils out thence like a juice;" but the mode of extracting the ointment from the zûkkûm, or, as Maundrell calls it, the *zacho-ne*, is by crushing the berry, according to that author and Pococke; which being put into hot water, an oil arises, which, Maundrell says, "they take inwardly for bruises, and apply outwardly to green wounds, preferring it before balm of Gilead." If I saw any of this zûkkûm-tree, I, as a mere common observer, did not distinguish it from the nûbk or lote-tree, of which it seems a species judging by the descriptions. The fruit of the Lote-tree is, when ripe, of most agreeable flavour, something resembling that of the English service; though its shape is more like that of a small apple or medlar, and it has a very large thick stone in proportion to the size of the fruit. Indeed, from Robinson's description of the fruit of the zûkkûm, it does not seem distinguishable from that of the lote-tree, and Pococke mentions the nut of the former as presenting, beneath the skin or thin flesh over it, "a ribbed appearance," which is eminently the case with the nut of the lote-tree. The pilgrims are said to call this modern balsam "Zaccheus' oil," inferring that the sycamore of Scripture, into which the chief publican of Jericho climbed, was a tree of this species. If so, Zaccheus deserves much greater praise for his zeal than most of us are aware of, for the zûkkûm is mentioned by all

as a thorny tree, and if it is the same as the nûbk, I know full well that it is most cruelly so, and it must be excess indeed of zeal that would lead a man to climb it. In the neighbourhood of the Lake of Tiberias, particularly upon its western shores, grow immense quantities of this tree, which, in the second week of the month of May, we found loaded with well-ripened fruit. Those we gathered at Jericho were hardly ripe enough to be pleasant.

As to the "rose of Jericho," I made inquiries of many, but it proved, like the apples

> "which grew
> Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed,"

wholly unknown. But a Jew at Jerusalem afterwards presented me with two plants, pronounced by botanists to be the "*anastatica hierocuntia*," of Linnæus, the "*thlaspi rosa de Hierico*," of Morison. A rose, indeed! within the eyes of which the "round and orient pearls of dew" might well stand, "like tears that did their own disgrace bewail."* Morison, in his "Historia Plantarum," justly sneers at him who first denominated it a rose;† as also does Bellonius, whom he cites as abusing the "Impostores Monachi," for calling it the rose of Jericho, and impressing upon the people the superstitious belief that it only opens

* Midsummer Night's Dream. Act 4.

† "Nam primum hujus planta denominatorem, aut fabrum forceps, aut ars ignara fefellit, dum Thlaspi cudere debuit cudit Rosam cui nihil similis, et à qua toto cœlo est diversa planta," &c. —Mor. Hist. t. ii. p. 328.

at the season of the nativity of our Lord.* Moreover, Morison brings both Bellonius and Rauwalfius to testify that this anastatica is never found in the neighbourhood of Jericho, but that it is found nigh the shores of the Red Sea, upon the sand, and in Syria, "*in tectis et ruderibus.*" Pococke mentions that he did not see it about Jericho, but "took a small one out of the ground in the desert near Cairo." The donor of my specimens asserted that they came from the plain betwixt Jericho and the Jordan. A Greek servant assured me they were also found in Greece, and much sought by the women, who, in that country, drink the water they are soaked in to assist parturition. Indeed, many superstitious virtues are attributed to this plant; amongst others, that it is very excellent against all manner of poisons, the bites of scorpions, snakes, &c.; all of which old L'Obel gives at length in his description of this plant, under the name of *rosa hiericontea.* My specimens, being dry and dead, had dropt their leaves when given me, but still spread forth their branches when soaked in water.

We left Jericho with regret, for it is a spot of

* "Impostores Monachi, ut ait Bellonius, hanc plantulam Rosam Hiericonteam appellarunt, quia planta hæc diu exsiccata, si post modum aquæ imponatur sese paulatim explicat, quod tolerabilis imposturæ prætextum dedit, atque spectantibus admirationem induxit, dum affirmant hanc plantam in vigilia nativitatis Dominicæ duntaxat aperiri, vel mulieribus partûs difficultate laborantibus," &c.—*Ib.*

most peculiar aspect, and encircled by a halo of historical reminiscences, legends, and traditions, as peculiar. A spot of the greatest natural fertility, crying out to the indolent Arab again to make its valley a garden "as admirable for its fruitfulness as for its delight;" again to render it the "θεῖον χωρίον" which ravished the eyes of Flavius Josephus. Neither is there reason to suppose that the historian's exile from his native land caused his imagination to magnify the delights of the groves of Jericho, so evidently fertile is its soil, so beautiful the streams which a little art might again lead to spread abundance and fertility around.

It is strange that no remains of greater magnitude are found to mark with more certainty the residence of Herod, the city which he adorned with castles, circuses, and other works, traces of which might still remain. Before that period we have no reason to suppose that there were structures here the ruins of which time would not quickly efface. The city which Joshua threw down and cursed lay desolate for many centuries; even until "Hiel the Bethelite laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua, the son of Nun." After the death of Herod, it is recorded by Josephus that Archelaus "magnificently rebuilt the royal palace that had

been at Jericho," and otherwise contributed to the greatness of Jericho. And it was evidently a place of note in the time of Vespasian, who "erected a citadel there," and garrisoned it just before he was proclaimed Emperor, upon the death of Nero, and signified his gratitude to Providence, and his magnanimity, by "cutting to pieces" the bonds of the Jewish historian with the noble ejaculation, "It is a shameful thing that this man, who hath foretold my coming to the empire beforehand, and been the minister of a Divine message to me, should still be retained in the condition of a captive."—Joseph. B. J. 4—10.

CHAPTER XXIX.

RETURN TO JERUSALEM.

Leave Jericho.—*El-Ghôr*.—Course of the Jordan.—Route to Jerusalem.—Romantic Spot.—Ancient Remains.—Bethany.—Reach Jerusalem.—Bad Weather.—Latin Convent.—Leave Jerusalem.

THE sun shone with intense fervour when, once more mounting our steeds, we spurred across the plain of Jericho in a south-westerly direction, in order to overtake our baggage train. Dark Quarantana's frowning heights overhung us on the west, the most gigantic and sublime of the mountains of Israel. Toppling crags and mighty chasms speak of convulsions that have shaken it to its centre, rent its very bowels, cleft it from its loftiest summit to its very base.

The rugged heights of Gilead, of Moab, and of Ammon, bounded the eastern horizon. The mountains of Abarim, the rocky limits of Moab, in the foreground, Nebo, Pisgah, Peor, which saw when "the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were clean passed over Jordan;" and again beheld the waters of that sacred

stream "divided hither and thither," smitten by the mantle of Elijah, their own craggy sides meanwhile illumined with celestial fire, as the cry of Elisha arose, "My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." These are the mountain walls which, enclosing the vale of Jericho, echoed with the blasts of the "seven trumpets of rams' horns," and the voice of the people of the Lord shouting "a very great shout," upon that seventh day when "the wall of the city fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, so that they took the city." Such are the mountain walls which, running north and south on either side, dip the bases of their barren ranges, at one extremity in the sweet and fruitful waters of the Sea of Galilee, and at the other in the bitter and unfruitful waters of the Asphaltic Lake. The intervening plain, of seventy miles or more in length from north to south, is traversed by the winding Jordan, "the greatest river of Palestine," which, gushing forth from a rocky cave at the base of Hermon, waters the lovely woods of Cæsarea Philippi,* or Banias, the romantic groves of Laish, or Dan, then, branching forth in numerous channels, intersects the vale *El-Huleh*,† bounded

* So named by Philip, the son of Herod the Great, to distinguish it from Cæsarea Palestina, known at this day as *Kysaryah*, or *Kissary*, on the coast about thirty miles north of Jaffa.

† *El-Huleh*, or *Ard-Huleh*, is the name generally given to the

by the mountains of Napthali upon the west, and by the range of Jebel Sheikh, or Hermon, on the east, until its concentrating streams enter the waters of Merom, surrounded with treacherous and fatal marshes, a glorious covert for the boar, and upon the coasts of which once gathered together the enemies of Israel to fight against the Lord of hosts; Jabin, King of Hazor, Johab, King of Madon, the Kings of Shimron and of Achshaph, with other rulers from the mountains and the plains of Chinneroth and Dor, "they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many:" but Joshua, with his mighty men of war, falling suddenly upon them, smote them, "until they left them none remaining." Leaving this highly interesting flood,* then does the Jordan issue forth one united river, and rushing on, falls into the beautiful Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, at its northern extremity, from whence passing out again at the south-western point,

tract of country between Merom, or the Lake Houle, and Banias; though *Ard-Banias* is used by the natives to distinguish the upper portion of it, below that village. It is very marshy in most parts, being intersected by numerous streams, which, branching forth from the main stream of the cave Paneion, at the foot of Hermon, discharge themselves into the Lake Houle. We found these streams all fordable in May, though in some parts of considerable depth.

* The Lake of Houle, or Waters of Merom, is estimated seven miles in length, and four in breadth, by Josephus.

it winds through the plains of El-Ghôr* to pour its copious flood into the Dead Sea; thus, after a course of above a hundred miles, mingling the crystal waters of the cave Paneion, of Merom, and Genezareth, with the fetid flood of that sulphureous lake that covers the Vale of Siddim and the "Cities of the Plain."

As the traveller contemplating the plains and valleys traversed by this consecrated stream, meditates upon its winding flood, what scenes of passing wonder crowd before his imagination, each as it shifts giving place to one as marvellous and full of miracle! Scanning the sibyl-leaves of the mysteries of time, he finds each page as it unfolds before him (embracing together a period of above fourteen hundred years), fraught with wonders connected with Jordan's shores and flood. Three thousand years have passed since that sun rose to run its course which saw how the feet of the priests that bare the ark of God, dipped "in the brim" of the waters, caused its stream to fail and be cut off, so that "forty thousand, prepared for war," trod upon dry ground in the midst of Jordan, as they passed over to do battle before the Lord upon the plains of Jericho. Such was the first of the wondrous miracles, making the Hittite and the Hivite, the Jebusite and Amorite, with all the

* *El-Ghôr* signifies a valley or low district bounded with mountains, but is applied, *par excellence*, to the vale of the Jordan, between Tiberias and the southern confines of the Dead Sea.

tribes of Canaan to tremble as they heard how that the hand of the living God was thus amongst his people; how the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth had passed over before them into Jordan. Century after century rolled on, and the covenant of Jehovah, sworn to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, was remembered, and in part accomplished, when "Heaven opened her eternal doors," and the Spirit descended upon the "Lamb of God" standing in the midst of that same stream.

Eighteen hundred years have intervened, and pilgrims flock in thousands and tens of thousands from the corners of the earth, eager to dip into the consecrated flood, that—

> "Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
> Of washing them from guilt of sin to life,"

they may return to their homes, in their imaginations, freed from the "scarlet" of their sins. Forgetful are they that "vain oblations and incense are an abomination to the Great Spirit," unless they who sacrifice "cease to do evil, and learn to do well:" for these same pilgrims, who have toiled thus far, in spite of sufferings and danger, to embrace the waters of Jordan with the frenzy of fanaticism, may, a few days after the grand washing in that holy stream, be gazed upon by the astonished traveller, a tumultuous mob, cuffing and blaspheming to the best of their ability around the reputed tomb of Christ itself, during the ceremony of the "Greek fire:" and then, after having performed all the super-

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stitious mummeries for which they visited that soil

> "Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
> Which eighteen hundred years ago were nailed,
> For our advantage, to the bitter cross,"

back they go to their fatherland, many of them to resume, in all probability, a life of rapine and of murder; the only real profit derived from their weary pilgrimage consisting in a few precious rags, covered with holy grease from the tapers of the sepulchre, for a shroud, and the glorious and much-needed washing they have for once undergone; contributing far more to the health of their bodies than their souls, as far as one may be allowed to judge from the after-effect.

Leaving the plain of Jericho, instead of following the direct course to Jerusalem, we turned northward, and passing through scenery the awful solemnity of which no pen can venture to describe, suddenly did we come upon a beautiful ravine, where flowed a rippling stream of the most pure and crystal water, a never-failing source of nourishment to groves of shrubs and beds of cane, covering with the pride of their luxuriance its sloping banks of flower-bespangled verdure, rejoiced in by the gorgeous Syrian king-fisher, which, with its glittering plumage, ever and anon dashed past us in its arrowy flight, startling us with its shrill and peculiar cry of alarm at our invasion of a retreat almost unknown even to the wild Arab. 'Twas not alone the beauty of this oasis, rendered more radiant by its encircling frame of awful sterility, that caused us

to rein up our steeds with pleasure and surprise; but lifting up our eyes, we beheld a pass leading out of the valley towards the west, spanned by a lofty and noble arch, which upon further examination was found to carry an aqueduct across the ravine, the sides of which were precipitous and of great height. Moreover, upon the other side of the stream stood a ruined building of ancient brick, from which ran a paved but narrow way along the eastern margin of the valley, lying parallel with the water-course, pursuing which, we discovered it to terminate about half a mile up the stream. There a vast face of rock, encircling us on all sides, opposed further progress by land; therefore, dropping from a jutting part of it into the water, which was about waist deep at this point, I waded up it a short distance through a narrow cleft with perpendicular precipices of great height on either side, and Mr. Williams and Mr. Witts following, we found the fountain-head apparently, near which, in the face of the precipice, was a cavern of considerable magnitude, and evidently sometimes inhabited, numerous dried reeds having there been brought together as if to form a bed. The situation of this cave was almost inaccessible, and we could only look into it by getting on the top of a rock on the other side of the stream. A more solemn and mysterious retreat could surely never be found. In the face of a lofty precipice forming one side of a dark ravine, not twenty yards across, and wholly occupied by a deepish stream, who would

think of seeking for the abode of man! Upon the rock we stood on to view this excavation were some curious hieroglyphics, circles, and other strange marks, superficially scratched in.

Our escort alarmed at our unguarded wanderings here, came after us exclaiming that it was a most dangerous neighbourhood, and entreating us to return and keep together. One of their number they had taken the precaution to post upon a lofty eminence to look-out and give the alarm if he beheld an enemy; but not a soul was to be seen, not a human sound broke the unearthly stillness of that spot.

We picked up here numerous pieces of petrified wood, very porous, and averaging six or seven inches in length, and two or three in diameter. We, moreover, discovered the stump of a tree which had undergone the same process, standing erect in the ground in its natural position, and showing about three feet above the surface.

I noticed here amongst the Nûkb-trees a curious bird of a very diminutive size, perfectly black in plumage, but with a yellow bill. My shot would wholly have destroyed a specimen; and, moreover, it would have been rash to fire for fear of attracting the Arabs, therefore I could not obtain one. This was the first, and the only time I saw this species of bird. They were very lively in their movements, and seemed to eat the berries of the Nûkb. Upon these trees here there also grew a parasitical plant of the Mistletoe tribe, but with bright

scarlet berries, rendering it an object of considerable ornament to the boughs which cherished it. The stream was inhabited by frogs of various and remarkable kinds; some with stripes down the back of bright emerald green, and others beautifully spotted. I very much regretted that, having no means of preserving them, it was out of my power to bring away specimens.

As to the remains in this ravine, they are probably Roman, and the aqueduct doubtless once presented the pellucid waters of the delightful rivulet, to the plain of the "City of palms," where flourished the precious opobalsamum, a source of wealth to the ancient Jews, eagerly coveted by the greatest emperors of Rome. Proud triumphs were those, indeed, in which the victor bore a plant of the pride of Jericho; the gift of the Queen of Sheba to that King of Israel "who spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."*

* Balm, however, is mentioned in the Scriptures long before the Queen of Sheba visited Solomon: thus the merchants coming from Gilead, who bought Joseph, are said to have had "*balm*" amongst their merchandize; and again, Jacob, in Gen. xliii., is said to have sent down to the Governor of Egypt, to allay his anger, "*a little balm*" amongst the presents mentioned as the "best fruits of the land," which at once characterizes it as a valuable substance of the same nature, if not the very same as the opobalsamum of Jericho. Again, its preciousness may be noted by the small quantity directed to be carried, as to be inferred from the expression in the above passage,—"a *little* balm."

We hastened onward to Jerusalem, after leaving the above most interesting spot, hitherto, as far as we are aware, unvisited by any modern European traveller; but ages ago, very probably, a luxurious resort of that magnificent Tetrarch of Judæa, Herod, the son of Antipater, who not alone built and embellished splendid palaces at Jericho and Cypros, but also raised in the neighbourhood of the plain of palms many a town and village; preferring it in its fruitfulness to his proudly decorated cities of Ptolemais, Cæsarea, and Antipatris.

The first part of the intervening country was of a wonderfully savage and sterile character; rocky hills intersected with ravines and chasms, overhung by precipices and topling crags.

At last did we reach Bethany, now called Bet-Anea, "about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem," upon the eastern slope of Olivet, where dwelt Martha and Mary, and Lazarus "which had been dead, whom that One raised from the dead," who afterwards ascended into heaven from near that same spot. What associations are attached to this site, now a wretched village, populated by a most villanous race of robbers! Descending the Mount of Olives, we crossed the valley of Jehoshaphat, and, ascending the hill of Zion, passed through St. Stephen's Gate, once more to stand upon the site of that city of Melchizedek,—Salem, the "City of Peace;" where, after the expulsion of the remnant of the Canaanites, dwelt David and

Solomon, concentrating within her shadow the power, the wisdom, and the riches of the East, making Ezion-geber and Tadmor in the wilderness her gates of trade, whence poured in wealth in such abundance, gold of Ophir, spices, and precious stones, that *silver*, in the days of Solomon, "was nothing accounted of," whilst "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beersheba." How different her aspect now! wretchedness, poverty, and misery cry within her gates; and the traveller gladly turns his back upon her gloomy streets, in spite of all associations which led him from a far country to visit her.

Thus arrived once more in safety within the confines of Jerusalem, after this most interesting but far too hurried excursion, we again pitched our tents on the plot of ground behind the English Consul's house. But a change had come over the weather, day after day the rain fell in torrents, accompanied by strong gales of wind, which drove our party one after the other to seek shelter within the Latin Convent of St. Salvador, so that ultimately I alone was left to battle with the elements and the dogs; and, although I had so placed my tent as to take advantage, as much as possible, of the shelter afforded by the city walls to windward, yet did I experience the greatest difficulty in keeping my fragile abode from being frequently blown from above me. Moreover, in the night-

season, the rain pouring freely through the canvass, flooded both my couch and the ground; whilst the cold wind and my four-footed enemies vied in penetrating every opening to be found, by means of which they might add to my discomfort. After three days' pertinaciously humming,

—— "Non, si male nunc, et olim
Sic erit,"

hope and fortitude vanishing from my breast, I also withdrew in desperation to the monks' asylum, where, in a subterraneous cell, with bare walls around to keep the weather and the dogs out, I found bread and wine by day, and sleep at night, upon two old planks serving as a table. If a large aperture in one of the walls had been furnished with glass, as well as iron bars, so as to keep the cold out, and the bare earth flooring a little drier, it would have proved a shelter quite luxurious enough for any pilgrim. Such as the chamber was, I tenanted it until the first of the ensuing month, May, during which period several little excursions were made by us to the different spots of note both within and without the city-walls; the most extensive and interesting of which was that to the pools of Solomon beyond Bethlehem, a description of which may be found in the works of so many travellers that I will refrain from any comments or conjecture concerning them. Neither is it my intention to enter into any further particulars, topographical or otherwise, regarding the city of Jerusalem itself, or its outskirts, as in Robinson

and Smith's comprehensive volumes, as well as in other modern works, the present state and aspect of the city is fully treated of, and its antiquities described, thus rendering unnecessary and useless a repetition by an unskilled pen. And as to conjectures and discussions regarding ancient sites, it would be presumption on my part to touch upon them further than I have done. Little more, therefore, remains than to inform those who have thus far borne with me that, upon the first of May, in 1843, I gazed, for the last time, upon the desolate "daughter of Zion," then turned away to visit Galilee and her cities, and to drink of the waters of the Jordan at its very fountains, not neglecting the remote and mysterious Lake Phiala, from whence the limpid spring in the Cave Paneion, (the chief fountain-head of the Jordan,) is said to be supplied by subterraneous channels.* Crossing the

* Josephus, speaking of Paneion or Panium, says—

"This is a very fine cave in a mountain, under which there is a great cavity in the earth, and the cavern is abrupt, and prodigiously deep, and full of a still water; over it hangs a vast mountain; and under the caverns arise the springs of the river Jordan," &c.—Antiq. 15. 10. 3.

"Now Panium is thought to be the fountain of the Jordan, but in reality it is carried thither after an occult manner from the place called *Phiala*," &c. "It hath its name of Phiala [vial or bowl] very justly from the roundness of its circumference, as being round like a wheel," &c. He afterwards relates that when Philip was Tetrarch of Trachonitis he threw chaff into the basin, and it was found at the cave Panium.—Ib. De Bell. 3. 10. 7.

This remarkable lake is a grand *depôt* for leeches, and we found there many Druses, men and women, catching them, by walking

snow-capped Jebel Sheikh, or the Great Hermon, one of the "high places of Baal,"* and the northernmost limit of Israel's territory beyond Jordan, we wandered amongst the delicious groves and fountains once watered by the Abana and Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, now lost in the beautiful Barrady. Then, leaving that garden of delight, (from the ravishing loveliness of which Mahomet, beholding it, turned away, lest, entering to enjoy it, such a paradise on earth should rob him of that in heaven,) we contemplated the stately ruins of the "Temple of the Sun," at Heliopolis, or Baalbec; and, traversing the snows of Lebanon,† once more beheld the "Great Sea," and encamped upon that "goodly mountain," even amongst its cedars,—melancholy memorials of that period when "Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burthens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains!"—the trees of his forests are, now, indeed, few,—"a child may write them:" "Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down; Sharon is

into the water with bare legs as a bait. They send them to Damascus. It also swarmed with bright green frogs, and thousands of wild fowl. It has no apparent inlet or outlet; yet the level of its water is said to be always the same.

* The elevation of this mountain is about 11,000 feet above the Mediterranean.

† The name Lebanon is derived from the Arabic word for milk, *Leban*, thus illustrating the eternal whiteness of its lofty summits. The elevation of the peak Sannin, the loftiest of Lebanon, is said to be between 10,000 and 11,000 feet above the sea.

like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits."

Having thus passed from the southernmost to the northernmost limits of that land, within the confines of which, when "Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt," "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry," a word concerning the present state of that now dispersed race, within the limits of their inheritance, may not be deemed out of place.

It is evident enough that the Lord has not yet set his hand again to recover "the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria and from Egypt, from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." The present tottering state of the Turkish empire, its weak and miserable system of government in Syria, may, perhaps, forebode "the cutting off of the adversaries of Judah," as far as those their worst oppressors are concerned: but, as to the people of God themselves, no demonstration of their approaching restoration seems to be moving them to any extraordinary efforts, as far as I could hear or judge during my cursory journey through their land. They as yet show no sign of flocking together "as the sheep of Bozrah," as the "flock in the midst of their fold." What testimony

is to be found in Syria of the outcasts of Israel hurrying toward the kingdom of the daughter of Zion, as was lately reported and believed in England? Do you find it in the four "Holy cities" of the Talmud; Jerusalem, Safed,* Hebron, Tiberias? No; instead of any increase of their numbers in those cities, there is a decided decrease. At Jerusalem there are not at present above four thousand dwelling within her gates; whereas some years back they were far more numerous. At Hebron they have also rather decreased than increased. At Safed, that city which they regard with the utmost frenzy of affection, holding it even more sacred than Jerusalem herself, fully persuaded that there will be the capital of the Messiah's kingdom on earth, and that at his coming those of their faith found dwelling there will be blessed above all others; that city, moreover, where their Rabbins, most renowned for erudition and for piety, have been educated, lived, and lie buried;—in that most beloved of all their cities, their numbers were, only a century back, twelve thousand; a few years ago, five thousand; and now has it dwindled down to scarcely a thousand. And likewise at Tiberias,

* What ancient site this city occupies is dubious, some identify it with "*Bethulia,*" of the Book of Judith. Safed was a place of wondrous strength, and often contended for during the crusades. Until very lately it has been famous for its Jewish schools, and numerous synagogues.

have their numbers sorely dwindled. If, then, they have not flocked to Zion, to the valley of the last trumpet, the valley of Jehoshaphat; if they are neither to be found within Safed, the expected city of their Messiah, nor within the walls of ancient Hebron, nor of Tiberias, where is the traveller to seek them?

Two thousand years have passed since the smitten seed of Abraham have become aliens in their own land. Two thousand years have fled since the "withering hand" overthrew the glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and of Sharon; but the time has not yet arrived for the "setting up of the ensign for the nations, and for the assembly of the outcasts of Israel, and for the gathering of the despised of Judah from the four corners of the earth." The sun has not yet risen on that day when, in their gifted land, (but now labouring under the yoke of the curse,) "The ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed, and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." No! that day has not yet arrived, and surely will not, until they are a *converted* people. Driven from their land, and dispersed over the face of the earth, their home doomed to be defiled by the tread of "the worst of the Heathen," themselves to be contemned and persecuted outcasts on account of their rebellious disbelief, is it reasonable to suppose that their

restoration will take place until that disbelief is done away with, and they are a converted people, once more rendered fit to enter "the land of milk and honey, vines, and olives," and to repair "the desolations of many generations?"

Whether the Mission, now residing within the precincts of the "Daughter of Zion," is likely to prove effectual to the forwarding of this regeneration, may by some be questioned. I, if permitted to witness it, shall rejoice.

ARAB GUIDE FROM NAZARETH TO TIBERIAS.

ESQUISSE D'UNE CARTE
DE LA
PROVINCE DU FAYOUM,
pour servir à l'intelligence du Mémoire sur le Lac Moeris;
par
LINANT DE BELLEFONDS.
Echelle
de
Metlouet Semouel
Tamieh
Birquet el Kerroun
Birquet el Kora
Sennoris
Santoun
Elachiaw
Alem Gamche
Nezlet
Kasr Keiroun
Rarhab el Yssaf
Medinet
Deir
Attamine
Chidoun
Shah Nour
Shah Mesoud
Medinet Hati
Tedoussie
Cabanesse
Dogue de Bopet
Bené Ade
Abousir el Malag
Zawieh
Elmasaleuh
Bénésouef
Plateau N° 2
Terrasses d'alluvion
Plateau N° 1
Terrasses superposées par les eaux après l'ouverture du Lac Moeris
Ligne du fond du Bahr Bellâma
Coupe selon la ligne A B de la Carte.
Hauteur du Bord du Bahr-Ismaïl à Avenant et Moeris.
Coupe selon la ligne A B de la Carte.
Echelle des hauteurs est d'un millimètre pour douze mètres.
Echelle des longueurs est la même que celle de la Carte.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

COPY of an ATTESTATION presented to the author on his departure from Jerusalem, in evidence of his having visited the different holy sites, as expressed therein. Subscribed by the Superior of the Convent of St. Salvador, at Jerusalem.

"IN DEI NOMINE. Amen.

"Omnibus, et singulis has præsentes litteras inspecturis, lecturis, vel legi audituris fidem, notumque facimus Nos infrascripti Custos Terræ Sanctæ, *Dawson Borrer*, in suo itinere Jerusalem pervenisse die 13 *April* 1843: inde subsequentibus diebus præcipua Sanctuaria, in quibus Mundi Salvator suum populum dilectum, imo et totius humani generis massam damnatam, a miserabili dœmonum potestate misericorditer salvavit; utpote Calvarium, ubi Crucei affixus, devicta morte, Cœli januas nobis aperuit; Sepulchrum, ubi Sacrosanctum ejus corpus reconditum triduo ante suam gloriosissimam Resurrectionem quievit, ac tandem ea omnia Sacra Palestinæ Loca gressibus Domini, ac beatissimæ ejus matris consecrata, a Religiosis nostris, et Peregrinis Catholicis visitari solita, pie, ac devote visitasse,

"~~Missam audivisse in eis~~

"In quorum fidem has manu nostra subscriptas, et sigillo officii nostri munitas expediri mandavimus.

"Datis Jerusalem ex hoc nostro Venerabili Conventu S. Salvatoris die 1 *Maji* 1843.

"De Mandato Rendmi in Christo Patris

(The original bears the seal of the convent here.) (Superior's signature illegible.)

Translation of the above Attestation.

IN THE NAME OF GOD. Amen.

To all and each who may inspect, read, or hear read, these

presents, we, the undersigned, Keepers of the Holy Land, testify and make known, that *Dawson Borrer*, in his journey, arrived at Jerusalem 13*th April*, 1843: then on the following days piously and devotedly visited those most holy spots in which the Saviour of the world in mercy effected the salvation of his beloved people, yea, indeed, of the condemned mass of the whole human race, from the dreadful power of devils; for instance, Calvary, where, affixed to the cross, after having overcome death, he opened to us the gates of heaven; the Sepulchre, where his most sacred body lay hid and rested three days before his most glorious resurrection; and afterwards all those sacred spots of Palestine hallowed by the steps of our Lord and of his most blessed Mother, which are usually visited by our devotees and by Catholic pilgrims.

That he heard mass there

In attestation of which, we have ordered that these presents, written with our hand, and sealed with the seal of our office, be set forth.

Given at Jerusalem, from this our venerable Convent of St. Saviour, the 1st day of *May*, 1843.

By command of our Most Reverend Father in Christ,

No. II.

Mr. Lloyd, whose lamentable end I have slightly referred to in the body of this work, was the only son of Major Sir William Lloyd, of Brynestyn, North Wales, a name not unknown in the literary world as the author of travels in certain districts of the Himalaya Mountains.

Mr. Lloyd, after spending the early portion of his youth in the East Indies, perfected his education in one of the German universities. His extensive researches into the geography and topography of the more remote parts of India, combined with a profound knowledge of the Hindoo race, rendering him a highly capable and worthy editor of the Gerard Manuscripts, he, in conjunction with his father, published Capt. Alexander Gerard's "Account of Koonawur, in the Himalaya," and also edited Sir Wm. Lloyd's "Narrative of a Journey from Cawnpoor to the Boorendo

Pass, in the Himalaya;" including Captain A. Gerard's "Account of an attempt to penetrate by Bekhur to Garoo," &c. &c.; works which the local governments of our Indian empire felt the value of and acknowledged accordingly. Had the lamented subject of these few lines been longer spared to the world, another debt of gratitude would probably have been due to him, for light thrown by his pen upon the clouded information we have as yet concerning the empire of the Caliphs, those once most potent monarchs whose sway, before its fall, extended "from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean."

Neither did Mr. Lloyd confine his attention wholly to prose composition: he was indeed a poet of no meanworth, and, in 1839, published his "Soldonella," warmly approved of in the reviews of the day. He possessed not alone a refined taste, but a soul generous and enlightened, anxious that this, it is said, should be deemed the motto of his labours, "No differences of caste, creed, or colour, should interrupt the brotherhood of nations, since all are children of the same God, redeemed by the same Saviour, and heirs of the same salvation;"*—a liberal motto, worthy alone of the true Christian, whose mind abounds with that charity which extends to all.

The following extracts relating to his death I am kindly permitted to draw from the copy of a letter written to his friends in England, by his fellow-traveller, M. Prisse d'Arînes, who was with him in Upper Egypt at the time the fatal accident took place:—

"Goornah, (Thebes,) Oct. 12, 1843.—On Monday last, the 9th of this month, George had gone out to Medeinet Haboo Canothes, part of Thebes, about a mile distant from our lodgings at Goornah, to draw or to shoot, whatever his fancy might be; he was, as usually, accompanied by a servant and a boy carrying water. I had remained at home on account of a wound in my foot, which he himself advised me not to irritate by walking. About an hour after he had left, I received the frightening intelligence of his being wounded by his gun having gone off accidentally. I hurried immediately to the spot. About half the way, I received, sent by him, his note-book, with a few lines written in pencil in it for his father. I found him sitting on the ground, supported by his servant, and bleeding profusely from the wound he had received in his breast,

* See *Atlas* for November 11, 1843, a notice of the death of Mr. Lloyd.

about two inches and a half under the right nipple. He had met a fellah (peasant) who wanted him to go out of the way; upon which he tried to push the man off with the butt-end of his short gun, the mouth of which was thereby turned towards his breast. By an unfortunate accident it went off, and the whole charge of heavy shot was lodged in his side. You will easily imagine, with what feelings I had him transported to our lodgings, on a litter made on the spot. Being placed on my bed, he felt a little relieved. I sent immediately to *Lugror*, to request Mr. Abeken, (a Prussian traveller who happened to be there,) to lend his boat for the conveyance of our friend to Manfalout, which was the nearest place where medical assistance could be looked for, an Italian surgeon in the Pasha's military service residing there. Mr. A. came over immediately with his boat; but, alas! we found it utterly impossible to carry our friend; nor would he allow it himself in his actual state. He thought his lungs and liver severely injured; and when he wrote those lines to his father he thought himself dying on the spot. In the afternoon he began to entertain some hope of recovery; but at the same time he spoke calmly of the far greater probability of his death, and gave me full directions about what he wished to be done in this case. He was perfectly resigned in the will of the Almighty, whom he repeatedly invoked, expressing a wish to live only for the sake of his beloved father. The night passed in almost overwhelming agonies of pain, every drawing of breath affecting his wound; but he bore up with admirable strength and energy of mind, supported by a deep religious feeling, which he expressed calmly but strongly.

"In the morning of Tuesday, he was a little relieved, and a removal was again thought of; but he declared he would rather wait at Goornah for the arrival of an English physician, who had passed eight days ago on his way up, and was expected back from Assuan every day. Alas! it was but too evident to me and all present that he could not be carried even a short distance, with so frightful an injury of the most vital parts, which every movement must of course have increased; he could not have arrived at the boat, the river being about two miles distant. Even though a surgeon had been present, I was, from the first, aware that there was no hope.

"He passed Tuesday in comparative calmness, in consequence

of greater weakness. In the evening he sank quickly; and he expired in my arms without almost any sign of suffering, his respiration ceasing quietly and without even a convulsion. Thus the prayer which he repeated frequently the day before, of having a quiet and easy death, was fully heard. It was two hours after sunset, Tuesday, the 10th of this month. He had been conscious from the first to the last, always calm and resigned, and whenever he could speak, overflowing with expressions of tenderness for his friends, &c.

"Alas! I have no other consolation to offer to you, to his friends, and his poor father, than what I feel most deeply myself,—the recollection of his virtues, of his noble and generous life, which will be a treasury in the memory of all that knew him, and the assurance of his undying love and feelings of deep and holy affection. May God Almighty strengthen and comfort the poor father! To me it is a great comfort to think that he has expired in my arms, the arms of a friend who loved him dearly and devotedly: the expressions of his gratitude so frequently and feelingly repeated, made me conscious that he himself felt comfort and consolation in this assurance; thus his last moments, thank God! were not solitary nor forlorn, even in this foreign country; and everything was done to soothe and relieve him. He was thankful that his father had been spared the sight of his sufferings, and also that time had been allowed him to send his last expressions of affection, and deposit his wishes and feelings in the bosom of a friend," &c. &c.

No. III.

The wood-cut below represents a Syrian plough, from a sketch I made in the neighbourhood of *Tartoura*, the *Dora*, or *Dor*, of Scripture, on the Syrian coast, nine miles to the north of Cæsarea Palestina, and first mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Joshua, and afterwards in the twelfth and seventeenth chapters of the same book, as also in various other parts of Scripture.

This implement of agriculture was wholly composed of wood, roughly put together. A boy walking by the side, pouring the seed into the funnel, it fell into the broken ground at the point of the share, as it was forced on. The soil having already been ploughed up before, this seemed to be merely a sowing instrument.

TRANSLATION

OF

M. LINANT DE BELLEFONDS'

"MEMOIRE SUR LE LAC MŒRIS."

WITH

A MAP OF THE PROVINCE OF FAYOUM.

DISSERTATION ON THE LAKE MŒRIS.

CHAPTER I.

SECT. I.—*Lake Mœris is situated in Fayoum.*

EVERYTHING tends to prove that Lake Mœris could only have been situated in Fayoum, and M. Jomard's excellent paper inserted in the work of the Egyptian Commission, leaves no room for doubt on this point. The discussion entered into by this clever geographer confirms entirely, in this respect, what the descriptions of the ancients, relating to the topography of Egypt in that part, clearly indicate.

The site of Lake Mœris is in Fayoum, and as that province includes also at this day an important lake, viz., the Lake Keïroun, or rather Birket el Korn,* as it is called by the Arabs, most of the writers who have treated on this subject have been naturally led to suppose that this lake was the ancient Lake Mœris. To corroborate this assertion it was of course necessary that they should discuss all the particulars transmitted down to us by the ancients relating to the size of the Lake Mœris, its eastern position,† its use, its position with respect to the other places, as Crocodilopolis, the Labyrinth, &c., and to compare these traditions with the character presented by Lake Keïroun at this present period. That discussion has been entered into, but I must confess, it has never convinced me.

In my first trips to Fayoum, which took place as far back as the

* *Birket el Korn*, means Lake of the Cape, or of the promontory of a mountain jutting foward into a flat country.—*Trans.*

† "*Orientation.*"—*Trans.*

year 1821, I was struck with the disagreement of the proofs identifying the two lakes, Mœris, and Keïroun. Above all, the utility of the Lake Mœris appeared to me incompatible with the actual situation of Lake Keïroun, yet, notwithstanding this, I considered it unworthy of philosophy, to conclude, with some persons, that the account of the beneficial effect of that great work should be rejected as fabulous. At a more recent period, when the duties of my office in Egypt bound me to seek attentively for the true position of that lake, in order to restore it, and thus to renew its beneficial agency, I acquired the full conviction, after much research and investigation, that the Lake Mœris was not the Lake Keïroun; and, moreover, I have succeeded in discovering the true site of that ancient lake or reservoir of water.

In order to comprehend thoroughly the exposition of my opinion upon these two several reports, it is important to understand the present state of Fayoum, and also to inquire into its original formation. I hope that the following succinct exposition of this indispensable preliminary knowledge will render the after observations plain to the reader.

Sect. II.—*Description of Fayoum.*

In all of the maps depicting this portion of Egypt, but still better in mine, which frequent journeys in that district have enabled me to make more complete, the eye can trace a basin of cultivated land, bounded by mountains of the Lybian chain, or by the desert; and towards the north-west of these lands a large lake; the whole of this tract of land forms the district of Fayoum. This little province is connected with the valley of the Nile by a strip of cultivated ground which crosses the border of the Lybian desert, and through the middle of which runs a branch of the Bahr Jousef. On each side of this strip, the length of which is about 9,000 metres,* the Lybian chain is low, but gradually increases in elevation southward, as far as the small sedimentous mountain,† and northward, as far as the mountain, where we find the Pyramid of Illahoun. Nigh the commencement of this band connecting the Egyptian lands to the

* The French metre is the ten millionth part of the distance from the pole to the equator, and is equal to $39\frac{370}{1000}$ English inches; or $3\frac{180}{1000}$ English feet, or $1\frac{9}{100}$ yard.—*Trans.*

† Marked in the map "guebelle Sédiment."—*Trans.*

district of Fayoum, to the east of Illahoun, there is a small stony hill, forming a desert island in the midst of the cultivated lands, being in length, from north to south, about 15,000 metres, and having betwixt it and the Lybian border, a cultivated tract about 1,500 metres wide, through which flows the Bahr Jousef.

Sect. III.—*Fayoum Proper presents two "plateaux."*

From the point where the line of cultivation expands, north and south, to form the district of Fayoum, the ground, as far as the town of Medinet, the capital of that province is, although torn by ravines formed by torrents at various periods, in its general character level; but the line where now flows the branch of the Bahr Jousef, towards Medinet, is the most elevated portion of Fayoum, and presents, as it were, the intersection of two planes gently inclining, the one towards the south, the other towards the north. This constitutes one plateau, which is comprised between Sèlé, El Edona, El Masloub, El Ellam, Biamo, Zawé, Medinet, Ebgig, Miniet el Heit, and Chidimo. I shall designate this portion, which is the most elevated of Fayoum, by the title of plateau No. 1. From those limits which I have just pointed out, the ground becomes lower and forms the plateau No. 2, embraced between the limits of the first, and a line carried from Tamieh, passing through Sennoris, Shanhour, Ebichiwo, Abou Gancho, Neslet, and going to Rarhab-t-el-Yeoud. From this last line, the land declines more decidedly towards the borders of the Lake Keïroun.

Sect. IV.—*Geological Formation.*

The above-mentioned ravines, afford the means of examining the geological constitution of the soil of Fayoum. Beneath the slimy sediment of the Nile, deposited in layers as in Egypt, one finds, six or seven metres lower, calcareous strata of forty, fifty, and sixty centimetres,* separated one from the other by argillaceous strata. These calcareous layers present nearly the same inclination as the surface of the land, and this three-storied declination from Illahoun down to the lake is most likely arising from a sinking of the calcareous strata after the deposit of the alluvium forming the soil of Fayoum; or else those platforms existed in the same state as now,

* The French centimetre is equal to 0, $\frac{193}{1000}$ of an inch.—*Trans.*

before the Nile had deposited there its mud; in that case it is to be supposed that the Nile only covered by degrees those various stories of stony layers, when it began to flow through the gorge of Illahoun. I would rather adhere to that hypothesis, for it may be noticed that on the first platform between Illahoun and Medinet, the bed of vegetable earth is much thicker than that between Medinet and Sennoris, and that it is again much less so from Sennoris down to the lake: and such must have necessarily been the case when the waters of the river had penetrated Fayoum, there depositing so much the less mud as they became distant from the principal currents. I then presume that the formation of Fayoum did not commence until a long time after that of Egypt. It is certain that the waters of the inundation must have arrived beneath the level of the mountain soil dividing Egypt and Fayoum, or as high as the bottom of the Bahr Jousef branch, in order to enable it to flow towards Fayoum and the Lake Keïroun; then the water, by flowing in that direction, may have gradually covered over the soil with mud, and thus given birth to the arable grounds of that province, such as we see them now-a-days, or nearly so. Such is the case with every current, torrent, or river, whenever they suddenly find a space or opening leading either to a flat country or to the sea.

Calcareous mountains wholly surround Fayoum; they are tolerably high towards the east and the west, and towards the south of much the same elevation, but less abrupt, the ascent to their summits being much more gradual, and on this side the water discharges itself by the slopes in considerable quantities during the rains to Casr-Keïroun and into the Lake Garag, passing through Wadée Rayan, where are some ruins of convents. In the northern part the mountains are less elevated, but the chain which separates Fayoum from the cultivated lands of Egypt continues uninterruptedly towards the north, with their slopes running still from a northern direction upon Fayoum towards Tamieh.

Sect. V.—*The Bahr Jousef conducts into Fayoum the waters of the Nile.*

The Bahr Jousef, which penetrates Fayoum through the narrow strip of land which we have before described, is a natural canal, or the bed of an ancient branch or watercourse derived from the river.

Its average width is fifty metres; its banks are of mud, perpendicular almost everywhere; it is also the same at the commencement of its course, running from Illahoun down to Medinet. But near the village of Awarah el Macta, its bottom is composed of a hard calcareous bed, which also constitutes the desert.

It is to be noticed that this stream follows the desert not only from Farchiout to Illahoun, where it yields a branch which goes to Fayoum, but also down to Mariout, near Alexandria. The situation of the Bahr Jousef in the low lands indicates that its bed was never that of the river, which—as all those by which disturbances originate—always flows in the loftiest part of the valley, formed by its inundations, and has the property of speedily raising its banks by a more abundant deposit of mud, thus leaving lower the lands which are more remote from its course.

Its numerous windings show that it was not dug by the hand of man, and besides no banks are to be seen, such as would have been produced by the heaping together of the earth in the course of digging it, as is to be remarked about even the most ancient canals formed as far back as the age of the Pharaohs. Only at the actual point of junction of this canal, and as far as Geldé, near the border of the desert, there may be seen banks, the nature of which prove that at that part an embouchure was opened for the ancient canal flowing along the desert.

Sect. VI.—*Principal Ravines of Fayoum.*

The Bahr Bella Ma, one of the principal ravines of Fayoum, which runs from south to north, coming from Awarah el Macta, and thence going to Tamieh and into the Lake Keïroun, has nothing more to characterize it as the work of man, and it is exactly the same with the Bahr el Ouadée, or Neslet, another ravine of a remarkable kind, which begins at a large dike formed of masonry, near Miniet el Heït, and runs westward to the Lake Keïroun.

A very ancient origin cannot be assigned to these ravines, and it appears evident that at a period when Fayoum was already cultivated the waters burst their natural barriers and flowed towards the lake, continually deepening the beds which they had made for themselves; the soil of Fayoum being mostly composed of the last and lightest portions of mud deposited by waters flowing wide of their original channel, is, on account of its light nature and its

friability, unable to oppose the action of water, like the soil of Egypt.

This very simple remark, which offers itself in support of my own opinion on the formation of Fayoum, allows us to account naturally for the quick removal of layers of mud of such light consistency, and to explain how the calcareous strata themselves were broken up by the violence and continually increasing fall of the waters after they had decomposed the banks of clay. I have observed similar effects produced by the agency of the torrents which one finds amongst the mountains of the desert, and, moreover, (relating exactly to this point,) I have seen the waters of the Bahr Jousef, after breaking up its dikes, hurry with immense force into the Bahr Bella Ma itself, enlarge its bed at once, carry away stones, and burst the bank which formed the foundation of a dike at Tamieh. The breaking up of the dike at Miniet el Heït, or Neslet, occasioned similar phenomena by overturning one of the strata of the bank which formed the bottom of the Bahr el Ouadee, or Neslet, and the stones thereof were employed in rebuilding the broken dike at the head of the Bahr el Neslet.

CHAPTER II.

SECT. VII.—*The Lake Keïroun, according to passages quoted from ancient authors cannot be the Lake Mœris.*

AFTER the foregoing summary description of those parts of Fayoum which are most important to be considered for the elucidation of the question which occupies our attention, and which we shall again have occasion to refer to, it remains succinctly to show the data which are furnished to us by the ancient authors and travellers, and to examine whether the Lake Keïroun will answer the various ends imposed upon it by historical traditions. With this latter view we shall begin the chapter with some preliminary considerations on Lake Keïroun.

This lake may be considered under two aspects, either as having

always preserved its present level, or as having had formerly a more considerable extent.

In the arguments already brought forward on this subject, we have admitted in preference, the hypothesis, that the Lake Keïroun had anciently for its limits, on the one part, the mountains which border it now on the north-west, and on the other part, the line which terminates the second platform. This hypothesis offers, however, some very serious difficulties; for instance, between the limits of the second platform and the borders of the lake, such as it is to-day, some ruins, rather unimportant it is true, may be seen, but along the chain of mountains that enclose the lake towards the north-west are some excavations which have been used as places of sepulchre; mummies have been discovered there, and consequently it is difficult to grant that the water of the lake ever reached that point.

Truly there may be seen in the neighbourhood of the lake, in the north-western part, some slight layers of mud in various places, and also some shells; but if those places had been under water during all the period of the existence of the Lake Mœris, the mud would have covered over these places as the other south-eastern parts, and one would perceive distinctly the mark of the level of the water, and also some remains of shells at the same height; but these phenomena do not exist; the ground is either stony or sandy. Whatever mud may be seen here and there deposited in small quantities may be attributed to the water of the lake during great inundations, or the rupture of dikes in Fayoum, when the water would flow in vast quantities towards the Birquet Keïroun. Besides, as M. Jomard very properly remarked, the water of the Lake Keïroun could never reach Casr Keïroun; consequently, the latter being lower than the level of the second platform's limit, the water of the Lake Keïroun could never reach those limits. When Vansleb says that at the time he went into Fayoum in 1673, people used to embark at Sanhour to cross over to the other side of the lake,* it must be understood by that, it was near that village; it is at Sanhour that boatmen and fishermen lived; and most likely Vansleb went into that village, for the purpose of embarking and crossing the lake. One must not suppose either that the waters were always at the height he saw

* Voyage en Egypte, p. 69.

them; for there are even now, near the lake, some ruins of Arabian baths of earlier date than the period when Vansleb travelled, and when he saw the water at such a height, it was merely accidental.

However, as this extension of the Lake Keiroun actually to the limits of the second platform of Fayoum has been considered favourable to the opinion of those parties who identify the Lake Mœris with the Lake Keïroun, it behoves us to confute that supposition, inasmuch as the greatest part of the arguments that I shall oppose, will apply to the actual position of the Lake Keïroun.

Herodotus says, the Lake Mœris has its length from north to south,* while the present lake, or Lake Keïroun, has its greatest length in a direction south-west and north-east; then the Lake Keïroun cannot be the Lake Mœris.

He says, also, that the Labyrinth is a little above the lake, and opposite the town of Crocodilopolis.† M. Jomard has perfectly established the point that the Labyrinth ought not to be looked for anywhere else than near the pyramid of Awarah el Macta. The discoveries made since the period of the French expedition have freed from doubt the exactness of that position; now, the pyramid of Awarah being at about seven leagues from the present Lake Keïroun, and five leagues and a half from the limits of the platform No. 2, how can it be possible that the Lake Keïroun occupies the site of the Lake Mœris, which ought to be only a short distance below the Labyrinth, but which one finds so far away. Then the Lake Keïroun is not the Lake Mœris. It is to be gathered from the report of Diodorus Siculus that a convenient situation in Lybia near the course of the lake was chosen for the construction of the Labyrinth. That author, agreeing with Herodotus as to the proximity of the Labyrinth‡ and the Lake Mœris, allows us then to conclude once more, that the Lake Keïroun is not the Lake Mœris.

According to Stephen of Byzantium, the town of Crocodilopolis was built near the Lake Mœris, or on its banks, if you like so to interpret the text.§

It is certain that the ruins of the town of Crocodilopolis, which at a later period was called Arsinoé, are the enormous heaps of rubbish to be seen near the town of Medinet el Fayoum, and which

* Herod. lib. 2, cap. 149.
† Ib. lib. 2, cap 148.
‡ Diod. Sic. lib. 1.
§ Steph. Byz.

the Arabs have named Coum Faresse. Besides, the Labyrinth is near the pyramid of Awarah. But Strabo says that the town of Crocodilopolis is 9,400 metres beyond the Labyrinth.* Coum Faresse is 8,600 metres from the pyramid of Awarah, which agrees tolerably with that statement, taking into consideration the uncertainty of the expression used, of *distance from a town to a monument.* It is evident, then, that those heaps shew the site of Crocodilopolis. Besides, the geographical position agrees pretty nearly with the latitude given by Ptolemy. Thus the remains near Medinet el Fayoum being on the site of Arsinoé, and lying at a distance of three leagues from the nearest borders of the Lake Keïroun, this lake cannot be the Lake Mœris.

Pliny says that the lake was between the Nome of Arsinoé and that of Memphis.† The most direct route from Memphis to the Arsinoïte district, the only one that could be followed by water during the inundations, would have been to go up the Nile, to enter Fayoum by the cultivated lands, and it is indeed at this day the only proper road. As the Lake Keïroun is not situated between the two districts, but, on the contrary, at the extremity of the Arsenoïte district, entirely westward, it could not even have been seen when coming from the district of Memphis into that of Arsinoé; then the Lake Keïroun is not the Lake Mœris.

Pomponius Méla says that the site of the Lake Mœris had been formerly a champaign country,‡ an aspect the Lake Keïroun could never have presented. It is to-day on a level with the sea, and its water, as well as its soil, must have been always impregnated with various salts, as that of the Natron lakes, the lakes of Magarra, on the road to Siwah, and those of Siwah itself, and of Arrachieh; these places, then, have never presented a champaign country, they must have been always covered with water, or in the state of salt marshes. At a more recent period they have answered as draining basins for the irrigated lands of Fayoum. Thus, as it is necessary to consider of weight what has been said by Pomponius Mela, we have one reason more to believe that the site of the Lake Keïroun is not the same as that of Lake Mœris.

Herodotus supplies us again with a remarkable passage on the

* Strabo, lib. 17, p. 812. † Plin. lib. 5, cap. 9.

‡ Pomp. Mela, *De situ Orbis*, lib. 1, cap. 9.

Lake Mœris. He says, it formed an angle towards the west, that it penetrated into the midst of the country along the mountain beyond Memphis, and he adds, that its shape was oblong.* The Lake Keïroun does not form an angle towards the west; neither does it penetrate the midst of the district; but it is at the extremity of the cultivated lands; then it is not the Lake Mœris.

Sect. VIII.—*Dimensions of the Lake.*

Herodotus gives the Lake Mœris a compass of 3,600 stades, or 60 schœnes.† Admitting with M. Jomard, that he means the short stade, which has $99\frac{75}{100}$ metres, that would give 359,100 metres for the 3,600 stades. Diodorus makes the lake of the same proportions as Herodotus,‡ and in this, as in many other respects, appears to have merely copied him.

Pliny gives the Lake Mœris a circumference of 250,000 paces, or 250 miles, and he quotes another measure given by Mutcïn which would come to 450 miles.§ The former of these measures would make about 469,442 metres and 50 centimetres, if reckoning by the mile of the itineraries, which is of 1,477 metres 75 centimetres. The latter measure must arise from the 3,600 stades of Herodotus, which are 99, 75 metres being mistaken for Olympic stades, of which there are only eight to Herodotus's mile, as M. Jomard has remarked. By reducing these 3,600 Olympic stades, which are 184 metres 75 centimetres each, they would give 450 miles. There are, then, three measures, every one derived from Herodotus' statement; but certainly that historian never measured the lake himself, he has set down as a fact what was told to him, and probably at that period exaggeration was very common, as it is now-a-days. Such a tendency as much appertained to the character of the ancient Egyptians as it does to that of the modern. We can trace it both in what has reached us from the former, and in our knowledge of the latter. Therefore, I think that none of those measures may be taken as exact.

Pomponius Mela only gives a circumference of twenty miles to the Lake Mœris,‖ and this calculation presents a very great discrepancy with the foregoing measures. Some people suppose that

* Herod. lib. ii. cap. 150.
† Herod. lib. ii. cap. 149.
‡ Diod. Sic. lib. i.
§ Plin. lib. v. cap. 9.
‖ Pomp. Mela, "De situ Orbis," lib. i. cap. 9.

his text has been corrupted, but it is just as reasonable to have faith in that measure, as in the others above-mentioned; it assists to prove that nobody has measured the lake, and that, doubtless, istorians and travellers adopted, without examination, the various opinions they may have heard pronounced on the subject.

Some more recent authors who have seen the Lake Keïroun, others, who have not even been near it, and who fancied they discovered the Lake Mœris in a site which never belonged to it; others, indeed, who have only read what has been written upon the Lake Mœris, give also hypothetical measures as to its extent.

Paul Lucas allows to the lake from 30 to 40 miles circumference.*

Pocoke and Father Sicard† attribute to it a length of 50 miles; and the former has also calculated it at 30 miles,‡ always mistaking the Lake Keïroun for the Lake Mœris.

Granger states it to be seven leagues long.§

Bossuet supposes the Lake Mœris to have a circuit of 180 leagues.‖

Danville and de Pauw make it 12 leagues long.¶

Lastly, M. Jomard gives to the Lake Keïroun a length of 12 leagues, and a circumference of 28 leagues. By admitting the limits at which he supposes the water could have arrived, that is to say, nearly seven metres above the actual height of the water when he visited the lake, its circumference would be 40 leagues, which would make, in the first instance, a perimeter of 124,432 metres; and in the second, of 177,760 metres. Therefore, it is evident, from the diversity of these admeasurements, either as between themselves or with respect to the Lake Mœris, that no such importance must be attached to these measures, as to draw any affirmative or negative conclusions on the identity of situation of the Lake Keïroun with that of the ancient Lake Mœris. This, considering the character of tradition, is only a problem of approximation, and it is only required not to swerve

* Paul Lucas, Voyage 3. t. iii. p. 63.

† "Mémoire des Missions dans le Levant," tom. 2 and 5 du P. Sicard.

‡ Pococke, tom. 1. § Granger, "Voyage en Egypté."

‖ Bossuet, "Histoire Universelle."

¶ "Mémoires sur l'Egypté," p. 151; et "Recherches Philosophique sur les Egyptiens."

too much from the limits given by the ancient authors. Thus the dimensions attributed to the Lake Mœris are too uncertain to allow anybody to conclude, judging by that alone, that the Lake Keïroun is the Lake Mœris, even if there was any coincidence between one of the said measures and the actual dimensions of the Lake Keïroun, such as it is at this day.

Herodotus gives to the lake a depth of fifty orgies,* equal to about ninety-two metres. But, from the lands of the province of Benisouef to the entrance of Fayoum, the difference in the level is only twenty-seven metres; then there must be again some mistake or error in the measure, or in the description of measure or of information, since it is impossible the lake can be of the depth indicated by Herodotus. But he makes also a rather important remark, viz., that the pyramid built by Asychis was built of bricks manufactured from mud dragged from the bottom of the lake, by means of long poles armed with crooks,† This would prove that the lake was not very deep, and consequently contradicts the measure stated by Herodotus. This fact would indeed have some analogy with the actual depth of the present Lake Keïroun; but we shall see directly, in speaking of the use of the Lake Mœris, that this Lake Keïroun could never have been turned to the same advantage, being of the same level as it has now. Besides, we have proved that it could never have had the depth attributed to it by the first measure of Herodotus. Consequently, from neither of these given dimensions is it possible to arrive at any conclusion respecting the identity of the position of Lake Keïroun with that of Lake Mœris.

Herodotus states also, and all the other authors agree with him and amongst themselves on this point, that the Lake Mœris was the work of man.‡ Let us investigate that question.

The waters of the present Lake Keïroun are nearly on a level with the sea, and about twenty metres beneath the limits of the second platform, the outline of which is supposed to form, on this side, the limits of the old lake. The average depth of water is four metres; therefore, it would have been requisite to cut down into the rock to a depth of twenty-four metres over a superficial extent of upwards of sixty square leagues. In the present hypothesis

* Herod., lib. 2, cap. 149. † Herod., lib. 2, cap. 138.

‡ Herod., lib. 2, cap. 150.

such a work cannot be admitted as possible, and such is indeed the conclusion arrived at by M. Jomard. The requisite number of hands and the time required for its achievement, are out of proportion with what is known to us of the historical epochs of Egypt. And besides, how can we account for the non-appearance of clearings, which must necessarily have been very considerable? Are we to admit that they were carried to the Nile? But that would have increased the labour to an impracticable degree. Then the Lake Keïroun is for certain the work of nature, and not at all the work of man. However, all the ancient authors agree in saying, that the Lake Mœris was made by the king of that name: thus, in this respect, the origin of the Lake Keïroun has no connexion with that of the Lake Mœris.

SECT. IX.—*The Lake Keïroun could never answer the purpose for which the Lake Mœris was intended.*

Upon considerations still more weighty than those already mentioned, we shall have strong grounds to throw out of discussion the identity of the Lake Keïroun with the Lake Mœris; and although what we are going to state relates rather to the use of the Lake Mœris as the regulator of the waters of the Nile, than to its dimensions; yet these two points are closely connected, and it is difficult to divide them.

Herodotus says, that the lake received the water of the Nile during six months, through a canal, and that for the other six months the water of the lake flowed into the river.*

Diodorus Siculus states, that the inundations being advantageous only when they kept within certain bounds, the Lake Mœris was intended as a receptacle for the surplus waters, when through their too great abundance the country was too long submerged.†

According to Strabo, the extent and depth of the lake made it capable of receiving at the periods of the inundations the overplus water, without letting it spread over the inhabited country or the cultivated lands, and of preserving, together with the canal, enough water for the irrigations; and when the Nile became low, the lake used to disgorge its overplus through both the mouths of the canal. To effect this, they had called in the assistance of art; each

* Herod., lib. 2, cap. 149. † Diod. Sic., lib. 1.

mouth being closed by sluices, by means of which the engineers were enabled to regulate the entry and the issue of the water.* Furthermore, Herodotus informs us, that the lake discharged itself into the Lybian Syrtes, through a subterraneous canal: which information he tells us he gleaned from the inhabitants of the country.†

The second platform lies two metres lower than the bottom of Bahr Jousef at Awarat el-Macta, and this can have never changed, since it is rock. Thus all the water that might have been in the lake below that point would have been useless for irrigating purposes, as also for increasing the flow, since it could not have been returned towards the lands of Egypt by the gorge of Illahoun, although there is no issue for it but that. Water coming from a level higher than that point alone could have been turned to account, but then it must have first covered the whole of the platform No. 2 to bring its level even with the soil of the Bahr Jousef, and it must have risen even higher than that in order to be directed towards Egypt, since it is proved that no flow towards the cultivated lands could take place by any other passage. Then in that case the district of Fayoum would have been but one immense lake, and with a vast height of water, which it is impossible to reconcile with the present aspect of things; the existence of numerous considerable towns, the ruins of which still subsist at Medinet, Sennoris, Sanhour, Medinet Madi, Medinet Nemroud, Talut Casr Keïroun, which are, it appears, of the same date as Crocodilopolis, or nearly so, and which would have all been under water if the water of the lake had been so high and in that position, oppose this idea. It is possible that Fayoum may have presented this phenomenon at the time of its formation, when the water, through the elevation of the bed of the river, and that of the alluvial lands, flowed through the low lands, communicating with Illahoun, and it was then that the valley of the Fayoum disgorged its overplus water on the north through the Bahr Bella Ma,‡ passing westward of the Natron lakes. There was no arable country then; every part of Fayoum was stony, the mud which now constitutes that province not having been yet deposited.

* Strabo, lib. 17, p. 811. † Herod. lib. 2.

‡ This *Bahr Bella Ma* is not the same as that of Fayoum; this name is given to many courses of rain-water torrents. In the deserts bordering Egypt, there are many thus named.

The traditions of the country are in perfect accordance with what I say. They relate that before the age of Joseph the son of Jacob, Fayoum was nothing more than a sea, and that before it was cultivated it was a marsh serviceable only for the draining off of the water from Upper Egypt. But this must be traced up to an epoch rather appertaining to geology than history, and it is quite time to return to what is said by historians. At that epoch, if we abide by the hypothesis making the Lake Keïroun represent the Lake Mœris, we cannot deny the total submersion of Fayoum, unless we presume the existence of a sufficient dike along the borders of the second platform, which dike has never existed. Such an indispensable work for forming the lake adds again to the numerous difficulties they would have had to encounter.

But, supposing we admit it, let us examine what quantity of water could be supplied in its course by the Bahr Jousef, and also the changes of level that it would have caused.

The junction of the Bahr Jousef with the Nile being then, as it now is, at Deïrout-Chériff, (which is the most favourable supposition in support of the hypothesis I am opposed to,) is higher than the soil of this canal at Awarat el-Macta, an invariable point of about forty-six metres, and the length of that canal, including its numerous windings, is about sixty leagues of twenty to the degree.

The speed of the water, concluded from similar data, would not afford any satisfactory average, on account of the perpetual turnings and windings of its course, of the frequent changes in its width and depth, of the islands which subdivide it, and of the streams running into it. In order to appreciate properly these various circumstances, let us state the result of direct and numerous experiments.

At the time of the largest increase I have found that as to the Bahr Jousef—

The width at the surface was.....	52	metres.
The width at the bottom.....	45	
The average depth	9-50	
The speed at the surface per minute	58	

Whence we get:—

Section	460	
Average speed	46-4	
Produce in one minute	21,378-8	metres.

The ratio between this product and that of the river is, during the inundation, as 1 to 28.

It cannot be supposed that this receipt of water was more considerable in ancient times, since the declivity could only increase; the bed of the Nile must indeed have become more elevated at the point of junction, and as to the opening at Awarat it never varies.

For the three months, or rather for the hundred days of the inundation, the Bahr Jousef would yield 3,078,547,200 cubic metres.*

The superficies of the Lake Keïroun, within the bounds that we have given it, is about eighty marine square leagues, or 2,468,642,000 square metres.†

The aforesaid quantity of water received by the Bahr Jousef, and conveyed to the lake, being diffused on its surface, would cause an increase of height in its water of 1 metre 24 centimetres. But, according to numerous observations, the yearly decrease in the level of the water, on account of the evaporation, has been valued at 0 metres 87 centimetres, which for 265 days, from the end of the overflow until its return, gives a decrease of 0 metres 63 centimetres. Consequently, the height of 1 metre 24 centimetres is then reduced to 0,61 centimetres, without including the water wasted in filtering through the sands.

Deducting 0,61 from 2 metres, which is the difference of level between the platform No. 2 and the soil of the Bahr Jousef at Awarat, one finds that the water of the lake, swollen by the inundation, is still 1 metre 39 centimetres below the level that would be required before it could commence pouring forth towards Egypt.

The evident result of this discussion on the ancient object of the Lake Mœris, as applying to the lake which we now find in Fayoum, is, that the Lake Keïroun, at whatever level we take it, could never have answered the purpose of regulator to the waters of the Nile, nor for irrigating purposes; the two chief objects attributed to the Lake Mœris.

The lake being then situated where the Birket Keïroun is, could not return through two mouths, as Strabo states, the water it had received during the inundations, and yet that author maintains such to have been the fact.

* The cubic metre is equal to 1, $\frac{307}{1000}$ cubic yards.—*Trans.*

† The square metre is equal to 1, $\frac{1195}{1000}$ square yards.—*Trans.*

Nothing shows either that at any historical period, that the Lake Keïroun could ever have discharged itself into the Lybian Syrtes, unless it was, as we stated before, at the time of the formation of the alluvial lands in Fayoum, when that country was but a vast lake; and consequently very long before the age of King Mœris.

SECT. X.—*Canal of Communication from the Nile to Lake Mœris.*

Diodorus Siculus says that there was a grand canal, eighty stadia long and three pheltres wide, serving as a communication between the Nile and the Lake Mœris.*

Strabo mentions also that canal, stating that the Labyrinth is thirty or forty stadia distant from the first entrance into the canal.†

If the Lake Keïroun is the same as the Lake Mœris, it is quite natural to believe that the canal of communication mentioned by Diodorus is the Bahr Bella Ma; but that supposition presents the same kind of difficulties as the hypothesis in support of which it is required.

The dimensions of the Bahr Bella Ma do not agree at all satisfactorily with those quoted. The length of the Bahr Bella Ma is much too exaggerated. This ravine does not communicate with the Nile, but with a tributary towards Fayoum of the Bahr Jousef, which itself, far from being the Nile, is only a small derivation of it. Its level declines from the Bahr Jousef down to the lake, and its purpose was to conduct into it the waters of the Nile. Then how can we explain that, on the contrary, its object was to carry off the superabundant water of the lake towards Egypt, as Strabo relates in the above-mentioned passage? How can we admit, even putting aside this contradictory statement, that this long and difficult cutting, forming the Bahr Bella Ma, was required to conduct to the lake, water coming from an elevated spot, and passing through Awarat el-Macta the level of which is much superior to that of this ravine, when there was no need of that declivity to lead the water into the lake; and, moreover, when a contrary slope was required to lead the water towards the land of Egypt?

The situation of Bahr Bella Ma agrees tolerably well with the assertion of Strabo, who places the Labyrinth at thirty or forty stadia

* Diod. Sic. lib. 1. † Strabo, lib. 17, p. 811.

from the first entrance of the canal; for the pyramid of Awarat, or the Labyrinth, is about that distance from the point of junction of the Bahr Bella Ma with the Bahr Jousef. But that circumstance, otherwise unimportant, does not affect the fundamental reasons which oppose our considering that ravine as being the same canal of communication mentioned by Strabo; and we shall show, presently, how the distance of thirty or forty stadia from the Labyrinth to the first entrance of the canal applies very well to another place.

SECT. XI.—*Characteristics of the Lake Mœris.*

Herodotus says, that the country where Lake Mœris is situated is dry and barren;* this answers pretty well to the site of the Lake Keïroun, which has on one side the Lybian desert, and on the other, the lands of Fayoum; but it answers also, to a new position, of which we shall speak hereafter.

Herodotus says also, with respect to the depth of the lake, that two pyramids may be seen nearly in the centre of the lake, that they are fifty orgies high, above the water, and that their bases are a similar depth below water. He adds, that upon each of these two pyramids there is a statue.†

The depth of the water of the Lake Keïroun in ancient times, was, as we stated it, about twenty-four metres, viz., four metres for the actual water, and twenty metres from the surface of the water down to the indicative line of the platform No. 2. If the Lake Keïroun was the Lake Mœris, the two pyramids, which were 100 orgies, or 184 metres seven centimetres high, would have appeared a great height above the highest level of the water; therefore, how does it happen, that the waters of the lake having decreased by twenty metres, no trace whatever of such vast monuments are to be seen now?

Pliny says, that there was a large pyramid in the Arsinoïte district and two in the Memphite, near the Labyrinth, in the place where *was* the Lake Mœris, that is to say, the great dike.‡ Therefore, Pliny affirms, as Herodotus, that there were two pyramids in the lake; but, also, from the text of this author it would seem that in the age he wrote, the lake was either destroyed or no longer made use of, and that the pyramids were still standing. But the Lake

* Herod. lib. 2, cap. 149. † Ibid. lib. 2, cap. 149. ‡ Pliny, lib. 37, cap. 12.

Keïroun must have existed uninterruptedly since the water of the Nile has discharged itself there, and consequently it has ever had water in its basin; therefore, this being the case in the time of Pliny, if they had considered the Lake Keïroun the same as the Lake Mœris, he would not have used these words:—"at the place *where the Lake Mœris was.*" From that passage it is clear, according to Pliny, that the Lake Mœris was not where the Lake Keïroun is at present.

The latter portion of that passage is also very remarkable: *The Lake Mœris, or the large dike,* cannot allude to a lake, and another place besides the lake, as it has recently been supposed in order to explain the useful purpose of the Lake Keïroun, considered as identical with the Lake Mœris. This word "dike" means as well an artificial tank, as it does a canal formed by the hand of man, and it cannot be applied to a natural lake like the Lake Keïroun. At this day they particularly distinguish in Egypt, a basin enclosed by dikes, which they call *Hod* and which is very serviceable during the inundations, from a natural lake, which they call *Birquet.*

We have reviewed the various traditions transmitted to us, and it is evident that for the most part they cannot apply to the position of the Lake Keïroun; but that which, above all, we do not find in this lake is the possibility of turning it to any useful object analogous to that attributed to Lake Mœris. Yet that utility being its most important feature, it appears natural enough to take it as a starting point in making researches for the true site of the lake.

In order that during the inundations, the lake might receive the waters of the Nile by means of the Bahr Jousef, it was requisite that its level be lower than the canal at the point of junction, and in the second place, to enable it to pour out again towards Egypt or the lands along the river, all the water accumulated during the inundation, it was requisite that it should be situated so that the water contained in it lay higher than the place through which it was to be discharged, and consequently above the opening of Fayoum, that is to say, above Awarat el-Macta, where stone constitutes the soil of the Bahr Jousef, since we have seen that there is no other place about Fayoum through which the water of any lake whatever, lying in that

district, could be discharged towards Egypt. From this last consideration, the position of the Lake Mœris should be sought in the most elevated part of Fayoum, instead of in its lowest parts.

CHAPTER III.

SECT. XII.—*Site of the Lake Mœris.*

ALTHOUGH strongly impressed with this last idea, I had often travelled from Fayoum to Zawiet el Masloub, on the banks of the Nile, and traversed the whole of the province without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion; yet at last a fortuitous circumstance clearly determined in my mind, a supposition which had entered it some time before, but in an undefined manner.

I was resting in the ravine of Bahr Bella Ma, near Sellé, and enjoying the pleasure, so rare in those countries, of sitting upon the green turf on the bank of a refreshing stream. I was regarding here and there around me the formation of the slopes of the Bahr Bella Ma, when towards the top of these nearly perpendicular slopes, I noticed above some strata of stones and mud, a transverse section of a small hill, and that on both sides of the ravine. These two sections were perpendicular in the direction of the road, and I remembered that this road was very straight, upon a height commanding the district more towards the north than the south; to satisfy myself as to the truth of that recollection, and to follow out the idea developing itself to me, I hastened to ascend the slope of the ravine, and found myself, sure enough, on the elevated ground where the road was. Then did I perceive plainly that it was an enormous dike, formed by man, and running very straight from El Edôna to a point a little eastward of the ruins found on the banks of the ancient Canal of Wardan. That canal, the most eastern of all those in Fayoum, is now abandoned; it had its junction with the Bahr Jousef, on the east of the point where the water discharges itself at Awarat. The dimensions of the dike, its condition, its materials, which are composed of a little earth,

hard stones, and rubble, gave birth in my mind to the opinion that it was a very ancient work, and probably connected with the Lake Mœris. Wishing to ascertain the correctness of this supposition, I followed this dike to its commencement towards the east. It was quite straight up to El Edona, and thence to El Ellam. On the south the ground was two metres lower than the dike, and on the north from eight or nine metres, which might be accounted for by the deposit of the mud in the interior of its limits, whilst this dike answered the purpose of retaining the water. It is rather difficult to measure exactly the width of this dike, because towards the north the slope has a very gentle declivity, but it may be estimated at about sixty metres.

At El Ellam, in the village itself, this remarkable work is lost sight of; it there disappears, doubtless having been forced away at that point by the water it was intended to restrain. A similar interruption exists at other points; but the numerous remains of that great work may be seen in so many places, that I could easily reunite them and make it a continuous line. Thus I found it again in the environs of Biamo, on the north-west, and on the west of those two stone constructions which have been mistaken for pedestals of statues. Thence, in going to the south-west, in the neighbourhood of Zawiet, between that village and the ruins of Crocodilopolis, I perceived the traces of some parts of the dike running in the direction of the remains of that city. I found it again on the south-west of Medinet, and imagined that it ran to Ebgig, and from thence to Attamné; afterwards I again discovered it, showing well-constructed masonry, and passing near Miniet el Heït, where it closes the head of the Bahr Neslet, and thus runs on as far as Chidimo, and thence towards the Lac Garac, where it terminates in the desert. On that side it was no longer formed of masonry. I measured it near Bahr el Neslet, where it has a width of nearly ten metres, a strong slope towards the base, and numerous abutments towards the fall of the water. Its height is, in the same place, nearly twelve metres; and there had been formed openings for the flow of the water into the Bahr Neslet. I also noticed on the spot considerable remains of ancient dikes in brick-work, some ruined bridges anciently broken away and rebuilt at the same place. According to the traditions of the country, that dike was originally the work of the Pharaohs.

Let us now imagine a line starting from the beginning of the dike on the south-east of Sellé, and continuing, as I indicate, as far as Birket Garac, and thence coming back towards the north along the desert by Sheik Ahmed, an important position, because there may be seen on the borders of the desert, the level of the water-mark at a height which it never attains at present. Let us follow that line, passing through Calamchâ, Deïr, turning to the right to Dimichquine; then taking the Pillawanne-dike, passing to Awarat Equilan, afterwards to the Illahoun bridge, going on the north-west by the dike of Gued-Alla, returning westward by Awarat el-Macta, and thence regaining, through Demo, its starting point at Sellé. According to my opinion, all the ground enclosed within that space and circumscribed by that line, is the site of the Lake Mœris.

The area of that ground, which is about 405,479,000 square metres, does not coincide either with the measure stated by Herodotus, and adopted by M. Jomard, or with the smaller ones among those given by ancient writers. It is larger than some of them, and smaller than the first. But we have seen what faith is to be placed in the dimensions given by the ancients.

The position of the Lake Mœris, as I place it, answering all the particulars, and especially that relating to its utility, one must not think of hesitating in order to seek exactness of dimensions, which none of those measurements transmitted to us by the ancients possess.

In order to establish the identity existing even in the minutest particulars, between the position we are pointing out as that of the Lake Mœris, and that of the ancient lake, we will state our proofs in the same order that we followed, to shew that the Lake Keïroun could never have been the Lake Mœris.

Sect. XIII.—*Analogy between the position pointed out and that of the Lake Mœris.*

The lake, situated as we have just described it, and being formed by the great dike to which we have referred, presents, according to Herodotus, its greatest length from the north to the south.

The positions of the Labyrinth and of the town of Crocodilopolis being, on the one part, at the Pyramid of Awarat el-Macta, and, on the other part, at the north of the town of Medinet where are the extensive remains called Coum Faresse, it follows that the

Labyrinth was very near the lake. The site chosen for its construction is correctly in Lybia, as Diodorus Siculus states, and situated in an advantageous manner, since it is not on the tract where we find the lake, but on the borders of the desert, and towards the entrance of the lake, at the place where the chain opens to form that entrance, and falls back to the north and south to form the lake as it is delineated on the map. For, whether the entrance of the lake is taken at Illahoun, or, on the contrary, if the gorge at the entry of Fayoum is considered as the canal of communication, the Labyrinth, situated as it was at the Pyramid of Awarat el-Macta, was near the entrance to the lake, especially according to the latter hypothesis.

The town of Crocodilopolis, as says Stephen of Byzantium, was situated near the lake, and, indeed, on its banks.

As Pliny says, the lake was placed between the Arsinoïte and the Memphite districts ; for, in coming from Fayoum by Illahoun, which was the way by water, and probably the most frequented before reaching Arsinoé, the lake intervened, and which was indeed navigable, as we find in Pomponius Mela ;* thus the largest part of the Arsinoïte district was at the back of the lake, which has caused Pliny to affirm that the Lake Mœris was between these two districts. Furthermore, I would add that, according to Pomponius, the lake was navigable for large vessels, undoubtedly used for bringing to the Nile merchandise from Crocodilopolis, to be afterwards distributed over the various parts of Egypt : and that may be easily conceived, if the lake is admitted to be where I place it ; but if it is supposed to have been where the Lake Keïroun is, what would have been the use of having barks upon it, since it could not serve for the purposes of communication, being upon the limits of the province, and on the borders of the desert?

The place occupied by our lake was formerly a champagne country, as Pomponius Mela says ; indeed, that part, even before having been elevated by the deposits of the lake, was the highest part of Fayoum, and must have been the first cultivated ; and at a later period, to form the lake, they took advantage of that space so appropriate for such an object. It must be noticed also that throughout the whole of that tract there are only two or three small villages to be found, and they offering no signs of antiquity.

In considering the lake and its communication with the Nile

* Pomp. Mela, lib. i. c. 9.

through the gorge of Illahoun, we find that it makes an angle westward towards Biamo, and that it runs through the lands along the mountain above Memphis. That is the part from Awarat up to Sellé. It must be remarked also that the lake's form is rather oblong, which answers very well with the statement of Herodotus.

As to the dimensions, we ought, perhaps, to speak of them here according to the order we have established, but we deem it better to treat that question in another paragraph.

Sect. XIV.—*Utility of Lake Mœris, if considered to have been at the newly-discovered position.*

It was into the great Lake Mœris that the surplus waters brought by the Bahr Jousef were discharged, the mouth of which canal being, as we have stated, forty-six metres above the point fixed for Awarat el-Macta, allowed the water of the lake to rise as high as the dikes could sustain it. We have seen that the quantity of water supplied by the Bahr Jousef during the period of the inundation was of 3,078,547,200 cubic metres; this volume of water diffused over the surface of the lake, which we have valued at 405,479,000 square metres, would produce a sheet of water about 7 metres 59 centimetres deep. By reckoning the evaporation at 0 metre 63 centimetres for nine months, or 265 days, that would reduce the depth of the said sheet of water to 6 metres 96 centimetres, which is nearly the height of the dike near Sellé above plateau No. 2, and above the soil of the bottom of the Bahr Jousef at Awarat el-Macta; consequently there would then remain a bulk of water equal to 2,882,539,319 cubic metres to be poured back from the lake upon the lands.

Admitting the case, where that water be used for irrigating purposes; that description of cultivation lasting six months, requires daily for every feddan* of ground sixteen cubic metres and two cubic centimetres of water, at the lowest average, for the lands of the province of Giseh and those of Lower Egypt; thus the water of the lake, being equal to 2,822,539,319 cubic metres, was sufficient for irrigating, during six months, 967,948 feddans. It must be marked, that the discharged water of the Lake Mœris could be used only for irrigating the Benesouf territory, and that

* The feddan of land is equal to 4,200 metres (square), and 83 square centimetres.

portion of Fayoum not occupied by the lake, the neighbourhood of Gisch, and the district around Béhéré, on the west of the ancient Canopic branch as far as Mariout. I do not presume that there ever existed over any branch of the Nile, an aqueduct to convey into the Delta the water of the Lake Mœris. The ancient authors would have doubtless mentioned such a work, which would have been much more remarkable than many they have described.

The whole extent of the lands of Egypt that we have just mentioned as the only portion that could have received the waters of the lake, may be valued as follows:—

	FEDDANS.
Fayoum, without the site of the Lake Mœris.....	100,000
Benesouf and its environs	100,000
Gisch and the part of Béhéré on the west of the Canopic branch as far as Mariout	800,000
Total: Feddans.....	1,000,000

If we refer to what is practised now-a-days, the culture by irrigation would have been far from applicable to the whole of these lands. Much, undoubtedly, was sown after the overflows, but without irrigation, and other parts were left to lie fallow, as they do at present in Fayoum.

I cannot admit, if out of the whole of the lands, they irrigate now only about one-eighth part, that more than three-eighths could have been irrigated at the period when the Lake Mœris was in existence. But I grant to that mode of cultivation, three times the extent at that ancient period when the process was more easy, since by means of the waters of the lake they did not require any machines for irrigation, and the population was undoubtedly much greater; nevertheless not exceeding the double of what it is now; that would render still 375,000 feddans from Fayoum to Mariout cultivated by the process of irrigation, whereas at this day there are only 60,000. This process would then require daily 6,075,000 cubic metres of water, which would be, for six months, 1,105,650,000; therefore there would remain in the lake about 1,716,889,319 cubic metres of water.

With that store of water, it was always easy, when the time of the inundation arrived, to convey it over the whole of the surface of land between Gisch and Alexandria; for the slightest increase is

always sufficient to inundate at least the half of the lands of Lower Egypt, and that was still easier when the lands lay less high than they do now. If the inundation failed entirely, it was even possible, in that case, to cause the water of the lake to cover 157,098 feddans, since it results from many experiments that the feddan, the superficies of which is 4,200 metres 83 centimetres, requires to inundate it a sheet of water 2 metres 60 centimetres deep; and therefore 10,922,358 cubic metres of water; now the total bulk of water left in the lake, or 1,716,889,319, divided by 10,922,358, yields for its quotient the aforesaid number of feddans, viz., 157,098.

We have seen that the water brought into the Lake Mœris by the Bahr Jousef, during a high inundation was the twenty-eighth part of the total flow of the Nile: therefore it can be imagined that by diverting such a considerable portion of the river, it was possible, in part, to prevent the damage sustained at that period from the superabundant overflows; it is, at the same time, clear that it would have at present the very same result, the same means being applied. Then the Lake Mœris would fulfil thereby the object attributed to it by historical tradition.

If, after too abundant an inundation, and when there was still in the lake a large quantity of water that would not be required, it happened that it was again augmented, it was necessary, in order to preserve to the Lake Mœris its proper flow, to let the overplus water escape into a lower place. It was, then, into the present Lake Keïroun that it was conveyed to gradually dissipate by evaporation, which quickly took place, it being diffused over so large a space. In order to accomplish that purpose, there was an opening to the dike, probably at the Bahr Bella Ma, near Sellé, and another one at the Bahr el Ouadée, or Neslet, and thus the Lake Mœris could discharge itself into the Lybian Syrtes, as Herodotus informs us, and although he says it was through a subterraneous canal, I believe it was through the Bahr Bella Ma and the Bahr Neslet, which were naturally below the soil.

The two openings, through which the Lake Mœris received the water and afterwards discharged it for irrigation, would naturally have been placed at the entrance of the derivation of the Bahr Jousef into the lake. According to tradition, the bridge of Illahoun is very ancient, and it is evident, indeed, that several parts of it must be of very early date. At the dike of Goued-Alla,

which I have mentioned before, between the Illahoun bridge and the mountain, there are to be found many remnants of very ancient constructions, and there was also the position of a large reservoir where, since its destruction, a smaller one has been made to let in and out the waters of the inundation to the interior basin at the dike of Goued-Alla.

The water, being brought by the Bahr Jousef, which has, as we stated before, its point of junction about 46 metres higher than the soil of the canal at Awarat el-Macta, entered, as it does now, through the Illahoun bridge, and filled up the lake to the very top of the dikes; those called now the Pillawanne and Goued-Alla dikes retained the water on the side of the lands of Egypt. When the lake was full, the Illahoun bridge was closed, and the water was allowed to flow through the Bahr Jousef, between the Illahoun bridge and the little mountain opposite, on the east, of which I have already spoken. Finally, when the water became low in the Bahr Jousef, and it was required to have water for irrigation, or to complete the overflows, then they opened the reservoir at the Goued-Alla dyke, and the water ran into the Bahr Jousef up to the environs of Alexandria. They could, in the same manner, let it escape through the Illahoun bridge, and thus, as Strabo notices, at the sinking of the Nile, the water flowed out of the lake through two mouths.

Sect. XV.—*Channel of Communication.*

Even now, during the inundation, barks come up to the Illahoun bridge by means of a large canal named El Magnoun, in order to land there merchandise from Fayoum. That canal has its junction with the Nile at Bénè-Adi, and passing by Abousir el Malag, loses itself in the Bahr Jousef; running up towards the south between the small mountain on the east, and opposite the defile where the communication between the lands of Egypt and those of the Fayoum and the Lybian chain takes place, it runs near the Illahoun bridge, where it unites with the ancient derivation of the Bahr Jousef, entering Fayoum. This canal ought to have been, during the inundations, as it is to-day, the means of reaching the entrance of the Canal of Communication with the lake, or at Illahoun; and as they used to navigate that canal with the same barks they used on

the Nile and without going through any sluices up to that point, they might consider themselves as being still on the Nile.

Herodotus allows to the Canal of Communication eighty stadia in length; most probably meaning the small stadia of 99 metres 75 centimetres, presenting an entire length of 7,980 metres. Strabo allows to it only thirty or forty stadia in length, but probably he means, on the contrary, the long stadia of 184 metres 72 centimetres, which would make 7,388 metres. These two measures agree pretty well. Strabo says that the Labyrinth is placed at this distance from the first entrance of the canal; thus the Labyrinth being positively at the pyramid of Awarat el-Macta, the first entrance must have been at the Goued-Alla dike, and the second at Illahoun; then the part between that point and the place where the lake became wider on the south and on the north, will be the Canal of Communication of Strabo. Besides, as during the inundation, the only period fit, then as well as now, for navigating these canals, they went through the Magnoun Canal and the Bahr Jousef up to the dikes of Goued-Alla and Illahoun, it was there that the entrance to the branch leading to the lake was situated; the first at the Goued-Alla dike, the second at Illahoun, going up by the Bahr Jousef; and lastly the Labyrinth was at the distance from the first entrance to the canal pointed out by Herodotus and Strabo, since it is about that distance from the point where there have been some constructions at the Goued-Alla dike, up to the pyramid of Awarat el-Macta.

Sect. XVI.—*Characteristics of the Lake.*

The lake, at the position that I have found for it, was in a district, dry and arid on one side, as if it were placed on the site of the Lake Keïroun; that is to say, from El Garac to Sellé, since on that side it is bordered by the Lybian chain.

We have seen, that the lake could never have had the depth mentioned by Herodotus; and that without doubt, the writings of that historian, in that respect, are in error. But it is important to notice, that at the spot we consign to the lake, its depth would allow the dragging easily from its bed, mud to make bricks with, agreeably to the second remark of Herodotus. Besides the probable mistake committed by that writer, respecting the

measure he has given for the depth of the lake, is connected with the dimensions of the pyramids mentioned by him; and, consequently, these pyramids could not have the height of a hundred orgies; but there were pyramids in the lake, according to his assertion, confirmed also in that respect by Pliny.

At Biamo there are, as I said before, two buildings of hewn stone which have been taken for pedestals of statues. They are two enormous masses rising above the soil; but one may remark, that around these two masses there is, on a level with the soil, a square enclosure constructed of large square stones, well disposed; and that what is still standing of the ruins, you find near the middle of this enclosure. This square enclosure shews still in some places above ground, three layers of stones. The enclosure of the mass situate most to the east, presents on that of its angles facing the north-east, four layers of stones for angles; the lowest is rather fallen out of its place, but the upper one being well preserved, one can see that they formed the angles and the ridge of a pyramid. It is impossible to mistake it, as may be seen by the little sketch I give of these constructions; so there is no doubt that these two masses were parts of pyramids, the stones of which have been removed for other buildings; as is, even at present, customary when it is required to erect either a small bridge or a dike in the neighbourhood. These two pyramids, though not in the middle of the lake, were in the lake; and as they were surrounded by water, it might be said that they were in the middle of it. It is, besides, easy to trace on the stones of the enclosure, the mark of the water which bathed these constructions to a certain height.

They are called in the country, *Corsi-t-Pharaoun*, or Pharaoh's chairs; and thus they were supposed to be pedestals of statues: and in this, again, traditions still preserved by the inhabitants of the country, agree with what Herodotus has transmitted down to us, who says, that on the pyramids there were statues.

Sect. XVII.—*Causes of Destruction of Lake Mœris.*

When the Lake Mœris was formed, the land was not so elevated as it is at present; it ought not to have been above the height of the bottom of the Bahr Jousef at Awarat el-Macta. At every inundation it was raised by the successive accumulations of the mud. The same receipt of water from the Bahr Jousef always taking

place, and a period of bad administration having succeeded to the glorious times when kings, like King Mœris, thought of immortalizing their reign by useful works, the dikes were neglected, as well as the reservoirs, and a large overflow ruining these works, destroyed the Lake Mœris, so that the water flowing without guidance or control, intersected Fayoum in all directions, producing those ravines which we see there now-a-days.

The two ravines, the Bahr Bella Ma, and the Bahr Neslet, (the latter having still at this period its head close to the masonried dike near Miniet el Heït,) were canals for the discharge of the Lake Mœris, and most likely it is only by the rapid flow of the water towards the Lake Keïroun, that these have been hollowed out in the soil as we find them at present from Sellé to the lake, and also from Miniet el Heït to the same place,* which perhaps proves still more strongly that the level of the Lake Keïroun has always been very low. At a later period, when the dikes of the Lake Mœris, towards the north, were badly kept up, or abandoned, the reservoir which was near Sellé, on the Bahr Bella Ma, was carried away, and the water always flowing through the Bahr Jousef, formed the channel from Sellé up to Awarat el-Macta, and its bed took the natural slope from the bottom of the Bahr Jousef down to the lake. At a still later period, they shut this channel at its junction with the Bahr Jousef, and at the embankment of the latter.†

Sect. XVIII.—*Utility of restoring the Lake Mœris.*

The question which we have discussed, and in the course of which we have examined the various historical data which determine the site of the lake, will convey to the mind of our readers, I trust, a full conviction of the truth of our statements and opinions. To accomplish our task, it remains to point out rapidly how it would be easy, and profitable at the same time, to restore the ancient construction of King Mœris, and to adopt, as worthy of our times, the ingenious

* This is conformable to the traditions of the country: they say that the Bahr Neslet was hollowed out by the water when the dike was burst at Miniet el Heït.

† This dike was carried off in 1823; and then the water rushed to the lake and caused much damage. The same year strong masonry work was constructed there.

and admirable conception which gave birth to that celebrated work. The only loss to be sustained in the restoration of the lake to its original state, by resuming the space formerly occupied by it, would be two or three wretched villages, and about 40,000 feddans of land. But that slight sacrifice would be wonderfully compensated by bringing into cultivation, without the assistance of any irrigating machine, eight or nine hundred thousand feddans.

In the case of unusual overflows, as those which took place in the preceding years, the lake, being put into a proper state of repair, would be, moreover, of the greatest benefit: it could be used to receive and discharge a great deal of water into the Lake Keïroun; and if it were not sufficient to prevent all the disasters resulting too frequently from the sudden rising of the waters, it would at least very considerably diminish them.

A long time after the destruction of the Lake Mœris, and since the domination of the Arabs, the Bahr Jousef and the Bahr Bella Ma have been employed as escape canals for the water towards the Lake Keïroun, and for the same purpose a reservoir was made at the embouchure of the Bahr Bella Ma and on the border of the Bahr Jousef. This reservoir is perfect up to the height that there is any fear of the waters attaining.

Ignorance has abandoned that useful mode of diminishing the excessive inundations; it would be a wise precaution no longer to neglect it.

THE END.

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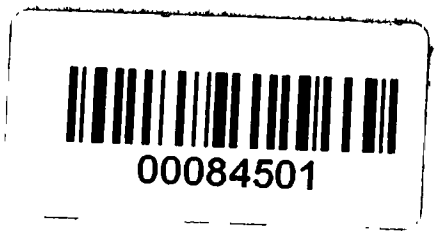
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